

THE
QUARTERLY
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

Vol. IV.--No. 3.

SEPTEMBER, 1832.

ART. I.—CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF DR. MASON.

The writings of the late John M. Mason, D. D. Consisting of sermons, essays, and miscellanies, including essays already published in the Christian's Magazine. In 4 volumes. Selected and arranged by Rev. Ebenezer Mason.

It is the ordinance of heaven, that no man greatly distinguished for his talents and virtues should die, without leaving an important legacy to the world—the *legacy of his own character*. This is designed by Providence to be in the place of his living example and active efforts; to plead the cause of virtue after the eloquent tongue has been palsied by death, and to stimulate to noble enterprises on earth, when the spirit has entered on a higher sphere of action in heaven. Each generation therefore is bound to preserve some substantial record of its truly illustrious men;—such as while living have contributed most under God to form its character. Men of this stamp will indeed do much even without the aid of such a record, to guide the destinies of posterity; because such is the power of great talents, and such the connection of moral actions with each other, that from the life of every man of distinguished greatness and excellence, there is a tide of influence sent forth which must force its way through every obstacle down the tract of coming ages. Still the interests of society demand, that these influences be widened and perpetuated, by the erection of permanent memorials of departed greatness. If this is altogether neglected, or performed in a careless and cursory manner,—if it is entrusted to inadequate hands, or becomes a monument of the partiality of human friendship rather than a faithful account of those qualities and actions which have really made up the character—great injustice is done both to the claims of the living and the dead. It is true indeed, that the character of departed illustrious men may exert its full influence upon

those who have known them well, without any other record of it than that which is inscribed upon their memories and their hearts ; but with the mass of the world it is far otherwise ; with them the want of some enduring and faithful delineation of what those men were, is the loss of all the good which might accrue to them from the contemplation of human intellect and virtue in some of their noblest forms.

But while it is due alike to the memory of great and good men, and to the interests of posterity, that a faithful account of such characters should be preserved and transmitted, it is important that the proper time for performing this service should not be overlooked. A work of this kind may lose in a great degree its legitimate interest and effect by being delayed too long ; for no record of departed excellence or greatness can come with much authority, unless it embodys the personal recollections of the writer, or at least is formed of materials of undisputed authenticity. The proper time, as it seems to us, for erecting such a monument as we here contemplate to the illustrious dead, is, when they have been in the grave long enough to have their characters looked at with due impartiality, and yet not so long as to have thrown them in any degree into the mist of uncertainty. The biographer of such men is laboring for the world and for successive generations ; and he should have every external facility, as well as every quality of mind and heart, which his important office demands.

The views which we have now expressed have led us deeply to regret, that down to this time there has appeared no adequate memorial of the illustrious man whose name stands at the head of this article. The public indeed were encouraged to expect, soon after his death, that this task would speedily be undertaken ; and it was understood, to a limited extent at least, that the services of a distinguished professor in one of our theological seminaries, long the intimate friend of Dr. Mason, and probably better qualified to do justice to his character than any other man, had been, or might be expected to be engaged for this purpose ; but we regret to find that the volumes before us have appeared without any thing in the form of a biographical notice. There were indeed two highly interesting sermons preached and published on occasion of his death, containing a brief outline of his life and character ; but a *volume* would scarcely be adequate to do justice to such a man ; and we cherish the hope that some individual, who is competent to the task, will yet be found to satisfy the reasonable demands of the christian public, by the production of a work, which shall carry down to distant generations the influence of one of the brightest characters of our age.

But as a complete biography of Dr. Mason is still a desidera-

tum, we cannot feel willing, in bringing his *writings* before our readers, not to make use of such materials as lie within our reach, to present a brief sketch of his eventful *life*. We shall only glance at a few of the more prominent facts in his history, and the more striking features of his character, depending partly on our own personal knowledge, and partly deriving materials from other sources, particularly from the judicious and valuable discourses of Dr. McElroy and Dr. Snodgrass, to which we have already referred.

Of Dr. Mason's ancestry we know nothing, except that his father, Dr. John Mason, was a native of Scotland, and was held in high estimation as a learned, able, and devoted clergyman. The father came to this country in 1761, soon after being licensed to preach, and took the pastoral charge of the Scotch Presbyterian church in Cedar-Street, New-York, where he continued to exercise the ministerial office with great fidelity and success, until his death in 1792. One of the noblest tributes which a son ever paid to the memory of a father, is to be found in the address which Dr. Mason (the son) delivered before the Presbytery relative to the resignation of his pastoral charge;—a tribute which no one can read without feeling a sentiment of veneration for the parent, and of admiration for the intellectual greatness and the filial sensibilities of the son.

Dr. Mason was born in the city of New-York, March 19th 1770. His childhood is said to have been characterized by a freedom from every thing vicious, an unusual sprightliness of temper, and a strong relish for study. It was obvious in the earliest development of his powers, that he possessed an intellect of no common order; and the rapid improvement and brilliant exhibitions of the boy gave no equivocal presage of the pre-eminent greatness of the man. His father, who was distinguished for his classical attainments, mainly conducted his education up to the time of his admission to college; and it was during this period that he laid the foundation of those habits of intellectual discipline, for which he was subsequently so much distinguished. In May 1789, he graduated at Columbia college in his native city, at the age of a little more than nineteen. After having spoken of his diligent application, it is hardly necessary to say that with such powers as he possessed, he held a distinguished rank in point of scholarship. His comprehensive and brilliant and versatile mind gave him the power of becoming pre-eminent in any department of learning to which he applied himself; while he is said to have been actually most distinguished for his classical attainments and his familiarity with metaphysical science.

The foundation of Dr. Mason's religious character seems to

have been laid at a very early period, in the blessing of God on a course of faithful parental efforts. His mind was imbued with a knowledge of the great truths of the gospel, as soon as its faculties were sufficiently developed to admit of comprehending them; and at a very early period, it is not easy to say how early, these truths, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, seem to have become the commanding principles of his conduct. And here we cannot but remark in passing, that there seems at this day to be too little importance attached to a direct parental influence in securing the early sanctification of children. We are most cordial well-wishers to the cause of sabbath schools and bible classes, and to all other judicious means which the church has so successfully brought into operation, for the religious improvement of the young; but we greatly fear, that in many instances this has been made an apology for relaxing parental vigilance; and that thus the most important part of the education of children—that which has the most direct bearing upon their eternal destiny—passes out of the hands of those who are appointed by Providence to take the oversight of it, and is turned over almost exclusively to the teachers of sabbath schools. The legitimate design of sabbath schools, is not to supersede, but to assist parental effort; and every christian parent ought to regard himself as the responsible person in this great concern; and while he cheerfully and thankfully avails himself of all the aid he can command in training up his child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, he ought to expect the blessing chiefly in answer to his own prayers and his own faithful efforts. If there were at this day, under the advantages of sabbath school instruction, more watchful restraint, more believing and earnest prayer, more looking and inquiring after the blessing on the part of christian parents, we doubt not that there would be many more plants of righteousness to diffuse their fragrance through the garden of the Lord.

But to return. Though Dr. Mason's *conversion* is not, so far as we can learn, dated to any precise period, yet he is said to have been the subject of deep religious impressions at the age of ten years. He once incidentally remarked concerning himself, that, at that early period, he used sometimes to go into the garret, taking along with him Ralph Erskine's work entitled "*Faith's Plea upon God's word*," and as he read it, to weep in view of his sins and humbly supplicate God's mercy. At seventeen, his religious views and feelings were so matured and settled, that he made a public profession of religion, and was received to the communion of the church of which his father was pastor.

From the time of his leaving college, and probably at an ear-

lier period, his views seem to have been directed towards the christian ministry. His course of preparation for the sacred office was begun and continued for a while under the direction of his venerable father ; and it was during this period, that he became so familiar with the original languages of the bible, especially the Greek ;—a circumstance which he afterwards turned to great account, in his expository labors. But after having passed a year under his father's instruction, he crossed the ocean in 1791, with a view to complete his theological course in the university of Edinburgh. Here he was honored with the respect and friendship of many distinguished men, among whom were Dr. Hunter and Dr. Erskine, who rendered him marked attentions and continued his cordial friends through life. Here also, he became associated as a student, with several individuals with whom he formed an enduring intimacy, and who have since risen to the highest respectability and usefulness. It was during his connection with the university, that his intellectual character seems to have been more fully brought out, in all its wonderful brilliancy, and strength, and originality ; and though he was constantly brought in contact with vigorous and noble minds, his own intellectual efforts lost none of their lustre by being compared with those of his most distinguished associates. There was a comprehensiveness of intellect, a lightning-like rapidity and energy of conception, a power of severe abstraction and rigid analysis, united with a glowing and commanding eloquence, which were witnessed with delight and astonishment, as well by his instructors as his fellow students ; and which seemed to mark out before him, the brilliant path to which he was destined. While he was thus distinguished by his intellectual powers and efforts, every thing that he did, evinced a most cordial attachment to evangelical truth. He was extremely jealous of the least attempt to rob the Redeemer of his glory, or to substitute any thing else in place of the Lord Jesus Christ, as all in all ; and hence it is said of him, that on being called upon by his professor to comment on an exercise of one of his fellow students, which had exhibited much talent, but had been marked by a striking destitution of evangelical sentiment, he rose, and after having given full credit for the exhibition of taste and imagination and power of argument, added that "there was one thing wanting in the discourse—it needed to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to entitle it to the name of a christian sermon."

One of the most important advantages which Dr. Mason seems to have derived from his connection with the university, was the admirable facility which he acquired at extemporaneous speaking. He possessed an original talent for this in no common de-

gree ; and here he had an opportunity to cultivate it, which at that time he could scarcely have enjoyed in an equal degree, any where else. Connected with the university, there was a theological society composed of students, which held its meetings every week, for the purpose of mutual improvement ; and the exercises of this society, consisted to a considerable extent, in extemporaneous debate. In these exercises, Dr. Mason took a prominent part, and while he was always listened to with admiration of his superior powers, it was by this means no doubt, that those powers became developed and matured, and that he ultimately held a rank among the first extemporaneous preachers of the age.

Towards the close of the year 1792, Dr. Mason's course in the university was suddenly interrupted by his receiving the afflictive intelligence of the death of his father, and his being invited to take the pastoral charge of the church with which his father had been connected. Considering that this was the church, in the bosom of which he had been born and educated, and that he was now but little more than twenty two years of age, this might have seemed at first view, a hazardous experiment ; but the knowledge which they had of his talents and piety, and their conviction that he was destined to eminent usefulness, led them unhesitatingly to direct their eyes towards him as their spiritual guide. The event proved, that their confidence was not misplaced. In compliance with their wishes, he returned immediately to this country, was licensed in November, 1792 ; and after preaching for them a few months, was installed in April, 1793, as their pastor. In this relation, he continued rising in respectability and usefulness for seventeen years. It is probable that during this period, he realized the richest fruits of his ministry.

One important service which Dr. Mason rendered to the church, especially to the denomination with which he was connected, a little before the close of the century, was the publication of his "*Letters on frequent Communion.*" Up to that period, it had been the practice of the Associate Reformed Church in this country, to celebrate the communion but once, or at most, twice a year ; and to precede it by a day of fasting, and follow it by a day of thanksgiving. The Letters to which we have referred, were addressed to the churches of that denomination, and were designed to bring them to a more frequent celebration of the ordinance, and to lead them to view it more in its scriptural simplicity. This pamphlet was extensively circulated, and produced a powerful, and to a great extent, the desired effect ; for it was followed on the part of most of the churches by a gradual, and

ultimately, an almost entire relinquishment of the ancient practice, and by the practical adoption of the views which the Letters were designed to recommend. While referring to this pamphlet, which is now republished in the author's works, we cannot forbear to say that it is characterized by uncommon strength of argument, and a most comprehensive view of the whole matter to which it relates ; and we should hardly know where to direct our readers for a more edifying, quickening, elevating view of the *general* subject of the communion than its pages present, notwithstanding it was written for a specific purpose.

We may notice in this connection, though somewhat out of the order of time, another publication of Dr. Mason's at a later period in life, which was designed to take away the unnatural, and as we believe in common with him, unscriptural barriers, which certain denominations, of which his own was a signal example, had thrown around the table of the Lord. In this work he defends, with great learning and eloquence, the principle of catholic communion ; and maintains that no church has any scriptural ground for repulsing away from the Lord's table, any who profess their faith in his doctrines, and give evidence of having been renewed by his Spirit. This was regarded by the denomination to which Dr. M. belonged, as a gross infringement on the established order of the church, and was met by many of them, as might have been expected, with that spirit of bold resistance, which is always sure to be the result of contravening any long established religious prejudice. But notwithstanding all this opposition, there was in the book so much of reason and scripture, of life, and spirit, and strength, that it awakened general attention, and ultimately, to a great extent, accomplished its design. Dr. M. had himself, during the early part of his ministry, doubtless from the influence of education, adopted the principle of exclusive communion ; but his soul was never made to be trammelled by the little peculiarities of sect ; and when his attention was directed to the subject, he became satisfied that the exclusive principle was inconsistent with the whole genius of christianity ; and that he had a fair warrant from the Master, for administering the communion to any who gave evidence of being his followers. The result of this effort in favor of open communion, was not merely an extensive change of practice on this subject in the denomination with which he was connected, but a general impulse in favor of christian catholicism among different denominations on both sides of the Atlantic. The work has been printed and circulated extensively in Great Britain, and has been regarded there as a most efficient auxiliary to the cause, which more than almost any other, awakened the interest and drew out the matchless powers of Robert Hall.

As Dr. Mason had known by experience, the advantages of a thorough theological education, he was exceedingly desirous not only that the standard of qualification for the ministry in this country should be elevated, but that young men destined to the sacred office, should enjoy better opportunities for theological improvement. This led him about the beginning of the present century, to project the plan of a Theological Seminary, to be established by the authority, and subject to the direction, of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church. This plan he succeeded in carrying into effect in 1801; and the result was, the establishment of the first theological institution in the United States. Of this institution, he was himself the very life and soul; he was appointed its first professor, and continued to discharge the duties of that responsible office, in connection with his various other official duties, through a succession of years, until, by the gradual decay of his constitution, he was admonished to retire.

To aid in the accomplishment of this favorite object—the establishment of a theological seminary,—Dr. Mason again visited Great Britain for the purpose of procuring a library. We do not know exactly how successful he was in the object of his mission, though we believe Providence smiled upon the enterprise; but we *do* know that he left behind him an impression of his greatness, which remains vivid on many minds to this day. Some of the most eminent clergymen and statesmen in England, rendered the highest possible tribute to his genius and eloquence; assigning him a rank among the very first preachers of the age. It was during this visit that he preached in Edinburgh, his famous sermon, entitled “Living faith;” and in London, his sermon before the London Missionary Society, entitled “Messiah’s Throne;” both of which were published, and are justly reckoned among the noblest efforts of his mighty mind. The London missionary sermons, have generally been preached by men of the first distinction, and have been published with few or no exceptions to the present time. We were looking them over not long since, as a matter of curiosity; and though we found among them many of distinguished excellence, we found none, in our own estimation at least, superior in power of reasoning, or force of eloquence, to the one of which we have just spoken. Indeed we doubt whether any Missionary Society has ever listened to a discourse, which has thrown more of heavenly majesty and attraction around the cause of missions, or which has made infidelity both feel and look more contemptible.

In the year 1806, his fertile and active mind projected the plan of the *Christian’s Magazine*;—a periodical which he conducted for several years, furnishing not a small part of the matter

which it contained from his own resources. In this work his versatile mind had full scope. Though it partakes in no small degree of a polemical character, yet there are articles from his pen which show that he was equally at home in almost every species of composition, and almost every department of learning. Some of the controversial papers in this work we are glad to see republished in the volumes before us; though we do not know a single article of his in any of the numbers of the Magazine, which we do not think well deserves to be transmitted to posterity.

In 1810, owing to the small size of the building in which Dr. M. preached, as well as to various other circumstances, he formed the purpose of establishing a new congregation; and in view of this, asked and obtained leave of the Presbytery to resign his pastoral charge. On this occasion, he delivered the speech to which we have before adverted, stating the grounds of his request, and urging it with a force of argument and eloquence which was perfectly irresistible. We know of nothing which bears more strikingly the impress of his original and mighty mind, than this address. It is hardly possible to read it without at one moment, smiling at some cutting sarcasm, and the next, melting at some expression of inimitable tenderness; here admiring some lofty flight of imagination, and there yielding to an impression of grave solemnity; and again shrinking back, as if about to be taken up in a whirlwind. We have heard more than one competent judge, who was present when this address was delivered, declare that it was the highest effort of eloquence to which they ever listened; and that its effect upon the audience in general, was entirely overpowering.

During the interval that elapsed between Dr. Mason's resignation of his pastoral charge, and the completion of the new church in Murray street, which was built entirely under his direction, the infant congregation to which he ministered, held their meetings for public worship in the presbyterian church in Cedar street; and never, it is said, did his transcendent pulpit talents shine more brightly, than during this period. It was about this time that he preached and published his sermon on the death of that invaluable woman, Mrs. Grahame;—a sermon in which the majesty of his intellect, and the tenderness and strength of his affections, are alike put in requisition to exhibit the claims of the gospel as a system of genuine consolation; and which, we think, no christian can read without having a more elevated and consoling view of the Resurrection and the Life. Mrs. Grahame had long been Dr. Mason's intimate friend: he had been her adviser in difficulty, and her comforter in trouble, and was well acquainted

with the numerous vicissitudes through which she had passed, and the marvelous fortitude and dignity with which she had sustained them. Hence no other man was probably so competent as he to delineate her character ; and in every part of the picture, we see the hand of the master and the heart of the friend. In the summer of 1812, the Murray Street church was ready for occupancy, and was henceforth the place of his stated ministrations, until his increasing infirmities obliged him finally to relinquish the active duties of the ministry.

The duties of Dr. Mason as professor of theology, and as minister of a large congregation, in connection with the numerous demands which were made upon his time by other public engagements, and in the ordinary intercourse of society, were enough, and more than enough, even for his gigantic constitution ; but in addition to this accumulation of labor, he accepted in the summer of 1811, the office of provost of Columbia college. This with him was much more than a mere nominal concern, for he was really the acting head of the institution ; and by the splendor of his talents, and the energy of his efforts, he gave to it a character which it had never before possessed. The amount of labor which he performed for several years, after accepting this appointment, would seem scarcely credible. During five days of each week, he was in the constant habit of attending to his classes in college, from twelve o'clock until half past one ; and to his theological students, from two to half past three ; besides devoting part of every Saturday to hearing and criticising their discourses. In addition to this, he made his preparation for two public services each sabbath ; and though his preaching, so far as language was concerned, was to a great extent, extemporaneous, yet it was always full of weighty instruction, and often the result of much intellectual labor.

But Dr. Mason, during these years, was exhausting his strength more rapidly than either he or his friends imagined ; for while he was seen moving majestically forward under this mighty burden of responsibility and intellectual toil, in the enjoyment of vigorous health, it seemed to be almost forgotten, that any shock could be severe enough to undermine his constitution. But time soon put this delusion to flight. In 1816, his health had become so far impaired by his excessive labors, that he found it necessary to resign the office he had assumed in connection with the college, and resolved to try the effect of a voyage to Europe. On the sabbath previous to his departure, he addressed his people in an appropriate and excellent farewell discourse, from the passage—"Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The parting with his family on that occasion, is said to have been

touching beyond description. The scene, as we have heard it described, was one of the finest exemplifications of the tenderness of natural affection, and the sublimity of christian faith, of which we remember to have heard.

At this time Dr. Mason visited the continent, and traveled extensively in France, Italy and Switzerland. The journey was a source of constant delight to him, not only as bringing relief from the cares under which his constitution had begun to sink, but as carrying him into a field of most interesting observation. His familiarity with the classical as well as religious associations of the countries through which he traveled, and the interest and cordiality with which he was every where greeted by the wise and good, as one of the most distinguished characters of the age, gave him an advantage which few travelers in foreign countries have ever enjoyed. His visit at Geneva, particularly, was one of great interest; for no man had more than he of the genuine spirit of the reformation, and none would tread on the dust of the reformers with deeper reverence. It was just at this period, that Dr. Malan was laboring in the conflict between evangelical truth, and Socinianism; and he has frequently, since abandoning the errors in which he had been educated, expressed his deep sense of obligation for the timely aid which he received in his intercourse with Dr. Mason, at the critical moment when he was making up his religious opinions. We do not mean to intimate however, that the views which Dr. Malan now holds are all of them accordant with the views of his venerable friend and counselor; for it is well known that while he maintains the fundamental truths of the gospel, and gives satisfactory evidence of having reached a high state of sanctification, he has nevertheless run into some unhappy peculiarities of doctrine, which, in connection with constitutional imprudence, have done much to impair his usefulness. Dr. Mason was of use to him, chiefly in directing and satisfying his inquiries, in respect to the great truths and principles of the gospel.

From the continent Dr. Mason passed over to England, where he arrived just in season to attend the anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society; an institution which he justly regarded as one of the brightest ornaments of the British church. On this occasion he delivered an address, which did justice both to his powers and to his feelings, and which was received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of applause. During this visit, he had an opportunity to revive many of the friendships of other days, and to hold delightful communion with some of the purest and noblest spirits of the age. Among these (to say nothing of the living) was that incomparable man, Robert Hall, whose admi-

ration of Dr. Mason's character was almost unbounded. We know that he has, at least once, rendered a testimony to his greatness, which may reasonably be a matter of pride (if the word can ever be used in a good sense) to every American.

In the autumn of 1817, Dr. Mason returned to this country, and met his congregation for the first time, apparently in a much improved state of health, on the 2d of November, the day after his arrival. On the evening of that day, he preached to an immense congregation, his first sermon, from the text—"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work;" and we can truly say (for we happened to be present on the occasion) that we never heard him preach with equal force or effect. We regret to find that this sermon is not embodied in his published works; and what is still worse, to know that no trace of it is believed to exist, except in the minds of those who listened to it.

Dr. Mason now resumed his accustomed labors in connection with his pastoral charge, in the hope that his health was so far confirmed that he should be able to prosecute them without interruption. But it was not long before the painful conviction was forced upon him, that his constitution had been effectually undermined by the labors of preceding years, and that he had nothing to expect but that his subsequent course must be one of gradual decline. In the summer and autumn of 1819, he experienced in two instances a slight paralytic affection, which however soon passed off, though it was an admonition to him and his friends of an advancing process of decay. After the second attack, he was induced by the advice of physicians and the importunity of friends, to suspend his public labors for six weeks; but at the end of that period he resumed them, and continued them without further interruption until February 1820, when an affecting and monitory incident occurred in his pulpit, which put the matter beyond all question that his work was drawing to a close. During the week which preceded the sabbath on which this incident occurred, he had been remarked by his family, not only to have lost his accustomed cheerfulness, but to be in a state of great bodily depression. When the sabbath came, he went to the sanctuary as usual and commenced the service; but soon after having read the portion of scripture on which he intended to lecture, his recollection failed, his mind became confused, and bursting into tears, he told the audience, that such was the infirmity which had been induced by disease, that he was unable to proceed; upon which he immediately offered a short prayer, gave out three verses of the fifty-sixth psalm, and dismissed the congregation.

His people being now fully satisfied of his inability to sustain the burden of care and labor incident to his pastoral charge, and

yet willing, if possible, to retain him among them to enjoy the benefit of his counsels and the privilege of sympathising in his sorrows, and doing what they could to brighten the evening of his life, resolved, if possible, to procure an assistant minister. Repeated attempts to effect this, however, proved unsuccessful; and meanwhile, Dr. Mason by an entire cessation from active labor, had gathered so much strength, that on the first sabbath of October, he again appeared in the pulpit. He commenced at this time an exposition of the first epistle of Peter; and it has been remarked by some who listened to him as far as he went, that though these lectures exhibited comparatively little of the fire of his genius, and of that impressive and overwhelming eloquence by which he had been so much distinguished in his earlier days, yet they breathed a spirit of more deep and earnest piety, and indicated a more single hearted devotedness to the cause of his master, than most of the discourses which had borne a deeper impress of his original and powerful mind. But here again, his course was at no distant period interrupted by continued and increasing infirmity, and on the 25th of October 1821, he finally resigned his pastoral charge.

We cannot forbear to pause for a moment at this stage in the history of this great man, to note the melancholy fact, that the waning of his usefulness seems to have been prematurely brought about, by his assuming a greater amount of labor than his, or we may say, any other constitution could bear. While we honor the spirit of active zeal which prompted him to undertake so many arduous enterprises, we are constrained to say, that we think he mistook his duty in attempting to do so much. In the case of almost any other man than himself, there would have been an insuperable objection to it, on the ground that it would be impossible, even for a limited period, to act in so many different spheres, and to perform such an amount of labor; but in his case the objection was, not that his powers were inadequate to it for a time, but that it must necessarily induce premature infirmity and decay. Much as Dr. M. accomplished for the church and the world, by his labors, we verily believe he would have accomplished more, if he had not attempted to spread himself over so wide a field, or rather if he had not accumulated upon himself a burden which no constitution on earth could sustain.

If we do not greatly mistake, Dr. Mason's experience furnishes a chapter of admonition, which ought to be read and pondered seriously by many of our clergymen at the present day. In this age of benevolent effort and of revivals of religion, the standard of ministerial labor has been greatly raised above what it was in former years; and he who brings with him to the sacred office in

these days, the spirit of a drone, cannot expect to be honored either of God or man. We rejoice that it is the order of the age, that ministers should be hard-working men; and as a general rule, we do not believe that the amount of labor which they perform transcends their real ability, or puts at hazard their health. But we are quite sure, that this remark has its exceptions; and if we mistake not, there is among many of our most devoted men, a seeming disposition to labor to the extent of their *present* ability, without taking into view the more remote consequences. The true rule by which every man should regulate his conduct is, to turn his life and all his talents to the best account in benefiting his fellow men and glorifying God. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary that his labors should be characterised by discretion and judgment; and that the period of active exertion, should not be prematurely cut short. Suppose then, that during a revival of religion, or some other season of uncommon effort, a minister in the fervor of his zeal, crowds into a given period twice the amount of labor which his constitution can bear; and suppose, that after the excitement by which he was sustained has passed by, he finds himself sinking into a state of settled lassitude and exhaustion, and possibly with the elements of some alarming and incurable disease, and that he is thus entirely taken off from his labors, perhaps for a longer time, than he had been engaged in them; we ask, whether there is not in all this, a manifest loss to the church? Would it not be better, that a minister should take six months to do a six months work, than by crowding the whole into three, to render himself incapable of exertion during the three which should succeed? The case becomes still worse, when it is remembered that in a multitude of instances, these extraordinary efforts give a permanent shock to the constitution, and actually prepare the way for an early grave. We know how strong the temptation is, especially during a season of revival, for a devoted minister to go beyond his strength; and it is always a soothing consideration to his conscience, that he is doing the Lord's work; but whether in a revival or not, he is bound to remember that God requires him to use his powers in such a manner as to make the most of them; and that in order to do this, prudence and diligence must be united. It is one effect of the error of which we are speaking, that ministers at the present day, are often obliged to be absent for a long time together from their congregations, in order to restore themselves from great exhaustion; and every one knows, that this is a step always to be regretted; and that it not unfrequently brings in its train, the most serious and lasting evils.

Previous to the resignation of his pastoral charge, Dr. Mason was invited by the Trustees of Dickinson college, Carlisle, to

the presidency of that institution ; and as he thought the labor incident to the station, would not be more than he could perform, and withal hoped, that the change of climate might be favorable to his health, he determined to accept the appointment. Accordingly, he removed to Carlisle shortly after, and entered upon the duties of the office which he had accepted ; but even those duties he was soon convinced, required an amount of exertion to which his shattered constitution was entirely inadequate. During his residence here, it pleased God to try him with severe affliction, in the death, first, of a beloved daughter, and then of a promising son. On both occasions, he discovered the keenest sensibility ; and in the latter case, when the companions of the deceased youth had lifted the bier on which his remains were placed, the father, under the impulse of overwhelming emotion, is said to have addressed them in this striking, but characteristic language—"Tread lightly, young men, tread lightly, ye carry a temple of the Holy Ghost." This dispensation, while it appeared to be eminently sanctified to the afflicted father, was also accompanied by a blessing to the institution over which he presided ; for it was the means under God, of awakening a general attention to the subject of religion among the students, and as there is reason to believe, of bringing many of them to a cordial acceptance of the terms of the gospel. In this revival, Dr. M. was doubtless less active, than he would have been in a more vigorous state of health ; but he is known to have been deeply interested in it, and to have regarded it as a genuine work of the Holy Spirit.

In the autumn of 1824, Dr. Mason having resigned his office as president of the college, returned to the city of New York, to pass the residue of his life among the friends, who had enjoyed the best opportunity to appreciate his talents and virtues. From this time, he relinquished the idea of attempting any thing more as a public man ; and determined to seek that state of quietude in the bosom of an affectionate family, which his circumstances seemed loudly to demand. During a considerable part of the time, until within a short period before his death, notwithstanding it was manifest that there was a gradual decline, he enjoyed a comfortable state of bodily health, and was capable of a moderate degree of intellectual exertion. It was painful to all who saw him, and had known him in better days, to perceive how that mighty mind was verging back towards the imbecility of childhood ; nevertheless, up to the last day of his life, there were evidences of strength and majesty, amidst all his weakness. There were times, even after his mind seemed little more than a wreck, when it would suddenly wake up from its habitual drowsiness, like a giant from

his slumbers, and soar away into the higher regions of thought, as if he was borne upward on the wings of an angel; and then perhaps in a single half hour, there could scarcely be discerned a trace of intellectual existence. We have heard of instances, in which clergymen who visited him after this decay of his faculties, have started some query in respect to a difficult point in theology, or the meaning of some passage of scripture; and his mind has instantly grasped the whole subject, and disentangled it from all difficulties, and thrown around it a flood of light, which could scarcely have emanated from any other intellect than his own. A striking instance of this momentary kindling of mind, happened to fall under our observation. Not long before his death, we had the melancholy pleasure to call upon him, charged with friendly salutations and messages from some of his friends in England. At first he seemed to hear without any interest, and said not a word to indicate that he had any recollection of the persons whose names were mentioned to him. At length, when an allusion was made to Rowland Hill, his faculties instantly brightened into exercise, and the image of his old friend, seemed for a moment to be distinctly before his mind: he then related a characteristic anecdote respecting him, with as much correctness, and interest, and effect, as he could have done at any period of his life; and after remarking, that he was afraid to go to England again, because he should be obliged to look for most of his friends in the burying ground, he relapsed into the same state of mind from which he had been roused, and apparently took no longer any interest in the conversation.

During this melancholy period of Dr. Mason's life, he habitually attended church, when his health would permit, and would sometimes remark upon the services with much taste and judgment, though always with kindness, and often with high approbation. Though his residence was remote from the place of worship, in which he had formerly officiated, yet that was the place to which his inclinations carried him; as he was surrounded there by his own people, and every thing was fitted to keep alive the most interesting associations. It is believed that he uniformly declined any part in the public services of the sanctuary after his return from Carlisle, with the single exception of administering baptism to a child of his successor; and on that occasion, we have heard it said, that there was in the prayer which he offered, so much of his characteristic appropriateness and originality, to remind the congregation of what he had been; and so much of unaccustomed hesitancy and confusion of mind, to impress them with the change he had experienced; that many of them were affected to tears, while they listened to him with the utmost reverence and

affection. We have understood that he uniformly conducted the family devotions of his own house, up to the close of his life; and that his prayers on these occasions, were scarcely in any respect different from what they had formerly been, except that they were characterized by more of the tenderness, and spirituality, and depth of devotion. After having gradually sunk for several years under the power of disease, the hand of death was at length laid upon him, and he went calmly to his rest on the 26th of December 1829, in the 60th year of his age.

In the rapid outline which we have now given of Dr. Mason's life, we have necessarily anticipated to some extent the more striking features of his character. But so remarkable was he in the constitution and habits of his mind—in almost every thing indeed which entered into his character, that we should do little justice to our own convictions of what is due to his memory, as well as due to the world, if we should limit ourselves to the incidental hints which we have already thrown out. In contemplating such a life as his, it is grateful to trace back the stream to the fountain; to analyze the character, and look at it in its original elements; to inspect the whole mechanism of a mind which operated with such mighty power, and produced such wonderful results.

The lineaments of Dr. Mason's character, were strongly impressed on his majestic form, and noble countenance. In his person he was considerably above the medium size, and was formed in most perfect proportions. His movements, though somewhat rapid, were always majestic and graceful. There was eloquence in his countenance even when his lips were sealed; something that told of burning thoughts, and lofty purposes, and left no one at his option whether or not to regard him with profound respect. It was a favorite kind of exercise with him to ride on horseback; and such was the dignity of his person, and the perfection of his riding, that he rarely appeared in this way without being the object of marked attention.

As was Dr. Mason's person, so, we hardly need add, was his mind—well proportioned, bold, energetic. His faculties were all originally of the highest order, and each faculty had received an appropriate and thorough training. He was fitted alike for the lofty and the profound; and was equally at home in the regions of philosophy, taste and imagination. He rarely, if ever, framed an argument, but he seemed to be conducted by a broad and luminous path to an irresistible conclusion. He saw clearly the difficulties by which any subject was beset, and he knew well how to encounter them; and sometimes before a single effort of his intellect, they would all vanish away. His mind was singularly inventive; for he rarely touched the most common subject without

throwing around it an air of originality, which almost left those who listened to him, to the momentary delusion, that he was conducting them into some field of intellectual light and beauty, which the genius of man had never before explored. His imagination, though eminently sublime and vivid, was entirely under the control of his more sober powers. It would indeed sometimes stretch its wings and mount into the third heavens, and seem to burn with seraphic fire; or it would wander in ecstasy among scenes of natural grandeur and beauty on earth; or it would fly off on a visit of curiosity to worlds of whose existence the telescope alone has made a report. Amid the grander and the softer, the more awful and the more delightful scenes of creation, it was alike in its element; but in its noblest excursions it was never wild or eccentric; never cut loose from judgment, and always moved hand in hand with taste. Nor was he less distinguished for his common sense—the ability to form a right estimate of men and things. He read human character as if by intuition; and no man could be long in his presence, but that he had taken the measure of his mind, and marked at least the prominent features of his character.

Nor were his moral qualities less remarkable than his intellectual. There was implanted in his nature a strong sense of honor, which made it difficult for him to brook a mean action. While he was careful to treat his fellow men with strict propriety, as became the various relations he sustained to them, no one could approach him with an indecorous familiarity, without being awed into respect by the majesty of his frown. He was as far as possible from any thing like concealment or cunning; for though he was not without that prudence which is justified and demanded by the circumstances of society, yet he was pre-eminently an honest man, and always acted in full day light. He was distinguished also by native decision and intrepidity; there was a moral heroism about him which belonged to his very nature, independent of the influence of christian principle; so that he never looked upon the face of man with fear, and never shrunk from any enterprise because it was great or difficult. At the same time he had little of that pride of opinion, that unyielding obstinacy, oftener the quality of little than of truly great minds, which leads an individual to shut his eyes upon the light that reveals to him his own errors; or to persist in maintaining errors in the face of his own convictions. He would not, such a mind as his *could* not, lightly surrender its own opinions, because they were never formed inconsiderately; but he would listen candidly to arguments by which any of his opinions were assailed, and if he could not sweep them away as a cobweb, he would subject them to patient investigation; and if he was con-

vinced that he had been in an error, whether of faith or practice, he would acknowledge it with his characteristic magnanimity. He was generous perhaps to an extreme. There was a chord in his heart which vibrated in a note of sympathy to every touch of woe ; and wherever he knew there was distress, his hand and heart were both open to administer relief. Never was he more in his appropriate sphere than while ministering consolation to the wretched ; and no man could be more welcome than he wherever he was known, amidst scenes in which consolation was demanded. In a word, his heart was the dwelling place of all that was warm and tender, and his approach to the disconsolate was always the harbinger of sympathy and kindness.

In the piety of Dr. Mason, if there was any one attribute more prominent than another, it was that his feelings were eminently evangelical. It were impossible that such a mind as his should take any doctrine upon trust ; and as all his religious convictions were built upon a thorough examination of the lively oracles, so his piety was based entirely upon these convictions. Those great doctrines which relate to the character and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and the agency of the Holy Spirit, he held with a firmness which nothing could shake ; and those doctrines emphatically constituted the spiritual nourishment of his soul. He dwelt upon them in public and in private, in a manner which showed that they were incorporated with all his habits of thought and feeling ; and not unfrequently in conversation with his christian friends, his mind would kindle with transport at the mention of the peculiarities of the gospel, and would throw around these cardinal truths a blaze of illustration equally edifying and delightful. We remember to have heard the lamented Bruen, who was Dr. Mason's particular friend and fellow traveler when he was last in Europe, remark, that at a certain time they lodged together in the same room ; and Mr. B. happening to be awake very early in the morning, heard Dr. Mason uttering himself in a low tone. He at first supposed that the Doctor was engaged in his morning devotions ; but soon found that he was revolving a passage of scripture in his sleep, and framing out of it a powerful and original argument in favor of one of the great doctrines of the gospel. When the argument became perfectly clear to his own mind, he repeated it two or three times with an air of satisfaction and triumph ; as if it were some gain to the cause of the Master whom he loved and served. Mr. Bruen being exceedingly struck with the argument, ventured the next day to mention to the Doctor, how much he had instructed him the night before in his sleep ; and when he repeated to him the substance of the remarks, his reply was that the argument was conclusive, though he had never thought of it before.

Dr. Mason always manifested an uncommonly strong faith. He loved to contemplate God not merely as a Redeemer, but as a father and a keeper; and to lay hold with confidence, of the promises which he has made in these various relations. It was an exercise in which he peculiarly delighted to leave himself and all *his* interests, his friends and all *their* interests, the church and all *its* interests, in the hands of God; and this feeling of filial confidence more than almost any other, gave a complexion both to his conversation and his prayers. In that sublime and affecting scene to which we have already referred—the scene of separation from his friends previous to embarking for Europe—he invited his family, at the moment of his departure, to join with him in singing the hymn entitled, “The Lord will provide;” and in a scene still more affecting—that of taking leave of his friends while he was on his way through the dark valley, he leaned with full confidence upon his Redeemer, and declared in reference to the only refuge in such hour—“that is enough.”

It would naturally be expected that with so much buoyancy and strength of feeling as Dr. Mason possessed, he would sometimes find occasion to lament the temporary suspension of a full share of christian circumspection and vigilance. Such we are assured was the fact. In the full tide of social feeling, and with his mind in contact with other minds of a kindred structure with his own, he did no doubt sometimes allow his native good humor to transcend the limits which his own enlightened judgment and conscience would have marked out. We have reason indeed to believe, that he regarded this as the besetting infirmity of his nature, and that it cost him a severer conflict than any thing else. He has been known, in speaking of it to his particular friends, to manifest the deepest regret, and no doubt it often carried him in penitence to the throne of the heavenly grace.

We have been led to the conclusion, from all that we have known of Dr. Mason's christian character, that his earlier and later days were more strongly marked by an habitually devotional frame of feeling, than was the intervening period in which he saw the zenith of his fame. Besides the testimony which we have had from some of his friends, in favor of the warmth and depth of his religious feelings in the early part of his ministerial life, we have seen some of his letters addressed at that period to a beloved brother in the ministry, which breathe the most heavenly spirit, and were manifestly dictated by a heart full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Subsequent to this period, when he had assumed the duties and responsibilities of several important stations, and was obliged, to task himself to the utmost in order to discharge them, when he became to some extent enlisted in the political specula-

tions and enterprises of the day, and rose to a point of intellectual distinction which few men in any age have ever attained ; then, there is reason to believe, was the winter season of his piety : though the principle was in his heart, yet its growth was no doubt in some degree impeded by the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, and especially by the homage, amounting almost to idolatry, which was every where paid to the grandeur of his intellect. But He who chastens those whom he loves, and who leads his people to glory through tribulation, was pleased, as the evening of life came on, to appoint to this great and good man a deeply afflicted lot. The hand of God touched him at the very point from which his glory had chiefly radiated ; and he was forced by evidence which he could not resist, to the melancholy conviction, not only that his sun had passed its meridian and was declining into the western sky, but that there were painful indications that before it should yet sink beneath the horizon, it might be overshadowed with clouds and thick darkness. In addition to the shock given to his intellect, he was visited with severe domestic affliction, in the early removal of two beloved and promising children. Under this severe paternal discipline his christian character shone out with more than its former brightness ; he submissively and cheerfully owned the hand of God in these afflictive dispensations ; and from this time onward he evinced a constantly increasing meetness for heaven. There was a mellowness of christian feeling, an impressive sense of personal unworthiness, a disposition to refer every thing to the providence of God, a strong practical faith in the mediation of Christ, and a cheerful waiting for the final change, which put it beyond all doubt that his christian character had gained a maturity and elevation, rarely to be found in any other school than that of adversity.

In the religious experience of Dr. Mason, to which we have just referred, we find nothing like a departure from the common order of God's providence towards his people. It is a rare case indeed, in which any of his children are suffered to pass through the world without a considerable amount of severe trial ; and if there had been nothing to cloud in any measure the brilliant path of Dr. M. toward the close of his life, we should almost have asked in view of his well nigh unexampled prosperity, what had become of the promise, "He scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." It ought not to be accounted by the people of God a hardship, but a privilege to suffer ; for in sowing in tears, they have a pledge of reaping in joy. Perhaps indeed, there is no species of prosperity, which is more likely to draw the soul from God, and which needs more to be visited with paternal rebuke, than that which arises from high intellectual distinction. The man of lofty genius is not only in peculiar danger from the admiration of

others, but from the idolatry of his own heart ; and if he is a christian, though his heavenly Father will keep him from falling, or will reclaim him from his wanderings, yet it will usually be by means of a severe discipline. How wise, how gracious is that Providence which sometimes associates eminent piety with illustrious talents, and keeps the latter from interfering with the former, by the counteracting influence of affliction !

Dr. Mason was pre-eminently great in the pulpit. It was one of the most prominent characteristics of his preaching, as of his piety, that it was highly evangelical. The great doctrine of salvation by a crucified Redeemer, as it lay at the foundation of all his religious experience, and constituted in his view the very substance and glory of the gospel, so it was the luminous center about which he delighted in his preaching, continually to revolve. Not that he confined himself to a single point of evangelical truth, however important, for he proclaimed the whole counsel of God ; but the doctrine of Christ crucified, was in some way or other, first and last in his public ministrations ; and every thing else sustained to this, the relation of a superstructure to its foundation. He inculcated indeed, with great zeal, the whole circle of moral virtues ; but he took care to distinguish between the morality of the world and the morality of the gospel ; and maintained that nothing deserved the name of evangelical virtue, which is not the fruit of living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time, it is hardly necessary to say, that his discourses were eminently instructive. Though he rarely allowed himself in any thing like metaphysical speculation in the pulpit, and kept within the limits of the bible and common sense, yet his preaching was far as possible from mere declamation. There were indeed strong, and glowing, and irresistible appeals to the heart ; but these were always based upon solid argument ; and the reason why he often took the passions by storm, was that he had previously entrenched himself in the fortress of the understanding. No man could listen attentively to his preaching, without gaining more noble and enlarged views of the gospel ; and no christian could sit under it, unless he was criminally listless, without having his devout affections quickened into more vigorous exercise, and becoming better able to give a reason of the hope that is in him.

We cannot forbear in this connexion, to express our apprehension, that *instructive* preaching, in some parts of our country at least, is too much undervalued ; and that there has been too much yielding to the popular taste on this subject on the part of ministers, if indeed they have not been chargeable in some degree, with originating it. With all that is bright and promising in the character of the age, it cannot be denied that in many respects,

there is a superficiality about it, which needs to be corrected ; and if we do not greatly mistake, this evil exists in respect to the preaching of the age, as truly as any thing else. The popular notion to some extent, seems to be, that men are to be converted by means of bold and stirring appeals, something that will strike irresistibly on the passions ; and some ministers seem to preach as though they believed, that if they went beyond a few topics of exhortation, notwithstanding they might keep within the limits of the whole counsel of God, they had no right to hope for any success in their ministrations. We will not say, that there may not often be a greater apparent effect for the moment, more of a tumult among the passions, produced by fervid and impassioned exhortation, where the truth of God is to a great extent kept out of view, than where it is soberly and intelligently held up before the mind, in all its length and breadth ; but we do say, that we have tenfold more hope, that apparent conversions will prove genuine in the latter case than in the former ; and that christians will be proportionably more edified, and strengthened, and advanced in the divine life. We fully believe, that there is the most reason to look for a sound and healthful state of christian feeling, as well as for genuine conversions among the impenitent, where divine truth is held up most clearly and constantly, and with the greatest simplicity before the understanding ; where ministers preach habitually with the impression that God will honor his own word, and that men are sanctified by the truth.

Dr. Mason's preaching, owing no doubt in a great degree to his natural turn of mind, was often controversial. Not that he was accustomed to attack in the pulpit, other denominations than his own, whom he regarded as holding the fundamental doctrines of the gospel ; but those who professedly rejected the gospel, or those who denied its essential doctrines, could not listen to him without thinking that his tender mercies were cruel. The infidel, the Socinian, the Universalist, found no favor in his eyes ; and when he undertook to expose their errors, there was a power in his reasoning, a majesty in his rebuke, a severity in his sarcasm, which were fitted to awe them into silence, and to render them with some, the objects of pity, with others, of little less than contempt. We have known him sometimes, to hold up a flagrant errorist before his congregation, exposing the arrogance of his pretensions on the one hand, and their despicable littleness on the other, until it seemed as if the object of his attack was completely swept away by his mighty arm. Whether this was, in all cases, the best way of accomplishing his purpose—whether there might not have been advantageously more that was conciliatory, and less that was polemic in his preaching, may reasonably ad-

mit of question ; nevertheless it must be acknowledged, that in his boldest attacks upon error, he seemed to be influenced by an honest zeal for the glory of his Master, and a holy indignation against those who would either openly or secretly tarnish the luster of his Redeemer's name, or diminish aught from the honors of his cross.

It was impossible to listen to Dr. M's preaching without feeling a great variety of emotions. At one time the mind would be chained, and the reasoning powers tasked to the utmost, by some process of profound argumentation ; and for a moment, the delusion would almost be induced, that such an intellect was made for reasoning and nothing else. At another, there would be a lightning-like impulse communicated by a sudden flash of his imagination ; and his hearers would be carried by surprize into some new field of beauty, or else they would be awed by some scene of natural or moral grandeur, which combined the rapidity of the cataract and the terrors of the storm. Here there would be awful exhibitions of the law of God, and of the wrath of God in the wages of sin, and a deep and solemn communing of the soul with the realities of eternity ; and there the gospel would come out in its most attractive loveliness, and the cross would seem to be made visible to the eye of imagination and faith, and the heart would be dissolving, and the eye overflowing from the sublimity and pathos of his appeals. And then again, there would be a kind of involuntary sportiveness of fancy, an incomparable aptness of illustration, an air of biting sarcasm which bordered well nigh upon ridicule, which would for a moment cause a smile to play over the countenances of the most serious of his hearers. He was however, always dignified ; and no man sooner than he, would have shrunk from prostituting the pulpit to be an arena for vulgarity.

If there ever was a man who could make use of the lighter emotions in the pulpit to advantage, that man we think was Dr. Mason. We have strong doubts however, whether even his preaching would not have been attended with better effect, if he had used this faculty, to say the least, more sparingly ; and we are quite sure, that much positive evil must result from attempts to perform feats of this kind, where there is no native adaptation to them. We have known instances in which a desire to say something bold and striking, has led men to an utter prostration of the dignity of the pulpit ; and puerile and even vulgar anecdotes have been repeated, which, while they have made a portion of the congregation laugh, have made a larger and better portion of them hold down their heads with regret and mortification. We do not at all object to great simplicity in preaching, or to the

occasional relation of an anecdote in the way of illustration ; but we maintain, that just so far as the pulpit becomes a theater for idle story telling, or coarse and vulgar sayings, it is perverted from its true design, and becomes an engine of evil, rather than one of the most important means of good. We would say then, let the man who has even Dr. Mason's talents of moving the lighter feelings of his audience, (if such a one can be found,) use it but rarely and with great discretion ; and let others to whom God never gave this power, be contented to use only the powers they have, without forfeiting their dignity or impairing their usefulness, by an affected eccentricity. If we do not greatly mistake, there is danger to be apprehended on this subject, in connection with those gracious visitations of the Spirit which we enjoy in revivals of religion ;—danger that ministers and good ministers too, may suffer themselves in the excitement of the moment, to forget the dignity which belongs to the character of ambassadors of God, and say and do things which may bring a lasting reproach upon the ministry, and materially injure the cause which they wish to advance.

Dr. Mason's manner in the pulpit, strikingly embodied the peculiarities of his character. There was every thing in it that was fitted to make a powerful impression. His noble form, his commanding countenance, his expressive eye, his easy and graceful attitude, his majestic and flexible voice, gave him advantages for public speaking, which few men have ever enjoyed. He could be loud as the thunder, soft as the zephyr, rapid as the whirlwind. His reading of the scriptures was so perfect, that it answered well the purpose of a commentary ; and no intelligent person could listen to him without gaining more correct and enlarged views of divine truth. Much of the power of his manner consisted in the expression of his countenance. The various emotions which were prompted by different parts of his discourse, were to be seen in his face, as if it were the very mind of his soul ; and this was one grand secret of his, always enlisting the most profound attention. It is unfortunate that his sermons, with but few exceptions, were never written ; though there is no doubt that his extemporaneous delivery was highly favorable to immediate impression. There was a kindling of the spirit in his looks, a life and energy in his gesture, a perfection of nature in his intonations, which would have been incompatible with reading his discourses, or perhaps even delivering them *memoriter*. It is one proof of this, that when he was obliged towards the close of his ministry, in consequence of his infirmities, to take up the practice of reading, his preaching greatly diminished in interest, and that notwithstanding he delivered ser-

mons which were written in the days of his greatest intellectual strength and activity.

In the capacity of a teacher of youth, Dr. Mason was scarcely less distinguished, than by his pulpit talents. His learning was extensive and varied; it was not limited to those branches which were more immediately connected with his profession, but embraced almost every department in the field of classical and general literature. His knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages particularly, was critical and minute; so that he could bring out from the ancient classics, many beauties which the greater part even of more thorough students, would overlook. He was also uncommonly familiar with the whole subject of Biblical Criticism; for he had made it almost the study of his life, to ascertain the genuine meaning of God's word, and had brought to this study, not only an inquisitive and investigating mind, but a rich amount of varied acquisition. With the ample stores of knowledge which he possessed, he had a wonderful facility at communication. Instead of spreading his thoughts over an extensive surface, he brought every thing quickly to a point; and left an impression on the mind of the attentive student, so clear and strong, that it could not be easily effaced. It was a grand object with him, and one in which he admirably succeeded, to train his students to a habit of reflection;—not merely to impart knowledge, but to establish a conviction, that the great secret of intellectual improvement lies in the power of independent thought, and to bring that power into active exercise. His instruction in the theological seminary, was founded almost exclusively upon the bible. He was accustomed to recommend to his students, a course of reading on the various subjects to which their attention was directed; but he often cautioned them to beware of an improper reliance on human authorities, and to let their conclusions be based ultimately on the law and the testimony. His intercourse with the young gentlemen under his care, whether of the Academical or Theological departments, was a delightful compound of dignity and familiarity; and the consequence was, that he gained in an equal degree, their respect and affection. We have heard the testimony of many who enjoyed the privilege of his instructions, that he was in that department, a model of all that was condescending, and dignified, and paternal.

It is hardly necessary to say, that Dr. Mason bore a most important part in the public concerns of the church. He was highly gifted with wisdom to plan, and with firmness and skill to execute. The theological seminary with which he was connected, owed not only the high distinction which it gained, but its very existence chiefly to his persevering efforts; and when by reason of infirmity, he could no longer sustain its interests, it declined and finally be-

came extinct. In a deliberative assembly, when some question of magnitude came up for discussion, he often appeared with unequalled strength and majesty. It was sometimes true of him on such occasions, as he himself remarked of Hamilton, that "he rose, and towered, and soared, surpassing himself as he surpassed others."

In all the private relations of life, Dr. Mason was most amiable and exemplary. As a son, a husband, a father, he always appeared with the utmost consistency, and dignity, and tenderness. His desire for the spiritual welfare and salvation of his children, seemed paramount to almost every other; and it pleased God in his gracious sovereignty and covenant faithfulness, that this desire should be granted; for before the close of his life, each of his children had hopefully become a subject of renewing grace. As a friend, he was open, generous, and sincere; and his attachments once formed, were strong and enduring. Those who knew him best, bear the most decisive testimony to the strength and value of his friendship. Such were his powers of conversation, and such the exuberance of his good nature, that he was the life of every circle in which he moved. It is hardly necessary to add, that an acquaintance with him was extensively sought, and that his dwelling was the seat of generous hospitality.

It is much to be regretted, that Dr. Mason's writings, though certainly an invaluable legacy to the world, should be comprised exclusively of his book on Catholic Communion, in four thin octavo volumes; and of the contents of these much the larger part, are a reprint of his former publications. He has indeed left enough to secure all the immortality which an author can have on earth; but we cannot but feel regret that so few comparatively of the thoughts of such a mind should have been preserved; and we are quite sure that posterity will lament this the more, the more conversant they are with his writings. That he tasked his gigantic powers to the utmost, there can be no question; but it may reasonably be doubted, whether if he had assumed less of public responsibility and labor, and given himself more time to use his pen, he might not on the whole have served the church to better purpose; for though his influence in that case might have been less perceptibly felt, while he was living, it might have acted upon a greater number of minds after he was dead. As the mighty power of the press is now so well known, and so adequately appreciated, we cannot but think that there is a loud demand upon those who have a talent for writing, to use it in the service of the church; for if an individual writes a useful and popular book, even though it may not possess merit enough to secure it a transmission to posterity, yet it may be the means of affecting the moral destinies of ma-

ny to whom by his personal influence, he could never have access. We say then, let the press be kept constantly at work in behalf of the church ; and let those who have the ability to write, diligently improve the talent ; and if they should not be known to posterity, they may at least have the honor of serving their generation.

The writings of Dr. Mason, as appears from the title of his works, are chiefly Sermons and Essays ; the former consisting partly of the occasional discourses which he published during his life, and partly of what were found in manuscript after his death ; the latter being a reprint of various articles which were originally published in the *Christian's Magazine*. Though the sermons are masterly, and bear the image of his own mind so distinctly, that none who have known him, can fail to recognize it, yet the impression which is gained by reading them, bears no comparison with that which was made by the delivery ; for in addition to the fact, that his best thoughts are said to have been extemporaneous, even when he preached a sermon, the substance of which had been written, there is an abruptness in his style, which, though it was admirably accommodated to his bold and exciting manner of delivery, is not so well adapted to the calm perusal of the study. The sermon which probably procured him more reputation than any other in the delivery, was that originally published in the *National Preacher*, entitled "*The Gospel preached to the poor ;*" and perhaps there is no other in the collection, which on the whole, has equal claims to merit ; though it must be felt by all who ever listened to it from the pulpit, that it was incomparably more grand and overpowering, than as it appears from the press. We doubt whether there has ever been a sermon preached within the limits of the American church, which has swayed, and melted, and overwhelmed an audience more than this, or which has left a deeper impression of the dignity and excellence of the gospel. Most of the published essays are more or less of a controversial character ; the most important of them are on "*the church,*" and on "*episcopacy ;*" the latter of which are regarded by Presbyterians and Congregationalists as perfectly triumphant on the points in dispute, between them and Episcopalians. We have no doubt that most of our readers will be disposed to find out more particularly the contents of these volumes for themselves. We are sure, that whoever takes them up, will find himself in communion with a mighty mind, and will often pause in admiration as he proceeds, and will not be disposed to quit the work until he has given it a thorough and diligent perusal.

From the survey which we have now taken of the life, and character, and writings of Dr. Mason, it were impossible to resist the conclusion that he was one of the master spirits of the age. It may be said of him more emphatically than of almost any other

man, that his field was the world. Few men have had direct access to as many minds as he ; but his hand was often felt where his footsteps and his voice were not heard. There is indeed scarcely any department of knowledge or action in which he has not exerted an influence ; for though his direct influence has been chiefly in the line of his own profession, yet such a mind as his could not view with indifference any enterprise which had for its object the intellectual and moral elevation of his fellow men ; and hence he was ready with his powerful aid, as often as any such object was proposed to him. While his influence has been so benignly and powerfully exerted not only in his own country but abroad, he has contributed not a little to elevate the American character in view of other nations ; for there are few men of any nation or age with whom he might not be advantageously brought into comparison. Our own mother country whom we have sometimes thought, (perhaps as a punishment for our mischief in other days) a little backward in allowing us all the merit which we might be disposed to claim, has nevertheless promptly awarded due honor to this illustrious man ; and more than once have we heard him spoken of in British circles, in a manner which was fitted, in our estimation at least, to heighten the privilege of being an American.

As Dr. Mason's name is intimately associated with the intellectual and moral character of our country, it will, as a matter of course, descend through all coming generations on the brightest page of her history. But what is still more important, his influence will be perpetuated with his name ; and he will live not only in the habits of many who will come after him, but in the future destinies of the church. It is one of the most delightful reflections which a great and good man can enjoy, that his labors do not expend their influence on the generation to which he belongs ; and that, even though his influence should not be acknowledged by succeeding generations, it will be written of him in heaven, that he had contributed, under God, to form and elevate their character.

Let it not be said, that owing to the exuberance and splendor of Dr. Mason's powers, he cannot be properly held up as a model to those whose intellect is of a far less commanding character. Doubtless there are few who, with the most vigorous and persevering efforts, could ever reach the eminence which he was permitted to attain ; though there is as little doubt that there are many who content themselves to remain in the ranks of mediocrity, who with suitable exertion, might stand forth not only morally, but intellectually, as lights in the world. Most men are lamentably ignorant of the extent of their own powers, because they have never brought them into vigorous action. No one can calculate the amount of good which an individual of even common powers may accomplish

during an ordinary life, provided they are well directed and faithfully improved. And let him who would do most and do best, beware that he fix his eye on no common model. Nothing is more sure than this to dwarf the mind, and give a commonplace, if not a groveling character to its operations. He who has any model before him, should be sure that it is an illustrious one; and so long as the power of intellectual effort is continued to him, he ought not to be satisfied with any given amount either of acquisition or of usefulness. Let an individual of ordinary powers possess the single and elevated views, the strength of purpose and the persevering industry of Dr. Mason, and we greatly mistake if he is not in the end surprised by his own attainments and efforts, and if the world does not find occasion to record his name on the list of their benefactors.

There is much in the present state of our country and of the world—much we may say in the character of the age, to stimulate to the highest efforts of intellect, and the most faithful improvement of all the powers which God has given us. No one can doubt that this is a critical era in our country's history; and that well directed efforts of mind are of immense moment in securing the privileges we have inherited from our fathers and transmitting them to posterity. If we look abroad, we see an unwonted agitation among the nations,—portentous signs of revolution, which tell in language of no equivocal import, that the social fabric is soon to be taken down, and built again upon some improved model. The very elements of society seem to be already in a commotion, waiting for some master spirit—some plastic hand to impress upon them the character of stability, and of political and moral reform. From these and other circumstances, it results, that the age has a peculiarly impressive character; and of course, is highly susceptible of being molded by influence. Let every man then feel that this important characteristic of the times, brings upon him an increased responsibility to task himself to the utmost for the improvement of his own powers, and for the benefit of his fellow men. With the present generation more perhaps than any preceding one, may the political and moral destinies of the world be said to be entrusted. God grant that men of high and low degree may realize that they have a part to act in this eventful crisis of things; and that that part is to do all that they can to render this an age of light and virtue and purity, that its spirit may be propagated to the joy and benefit of coming generations.

ART. II.—MORAL INFLUENCE OF MANUFACTURES.

Report of the Committee on Manufactures. May 23d, 1832.

Speech of the Hon. Asker Robbins of Rhode Island in defense of the System for the Protection of American Industry. Delivered in the Senate of the United States. March 2d, 1832.

UPON every consideration which we have been able to bestow on the condition, the spirit, and the expectations of the people of this country, it appears to us as settled, that they *must* have manufactures. A considerable portion of American capital, industry, and genius even now have no other profitable investment—can indeed be employed in reference to no other object. Whether the protective system was originally wise or unwise, whether the tariff of duties on imports was right or wrong, the surplus population of the middle and northern states *must* have employment. As their agricultural products are excluded from almost every part of the world, they have no alternative except manufacturing pursuits, or want of occupation. The mechanic arts in some form must be cultivated, or beggary will ensue. In this application of our resources and talents, we follow in the train of most other nations. The general pacification of Europe in 1815, has given this turn to human affairs. The nations of the continent with the cessation of war lost their employment, and we lost much of ours through the same change. They, therefore, turned their attention with the utmost ardor, to the mechanic arts. It is now no longer Great Britain that manufactures for the world. She finds her competitors as to many articles, in every state on the continent. As a few out of a multitude of instances showing the progress of these pursuits, it may be mentioned, that the cotton manufactures of France and Belgium have increased ten fold in ten years. The silk trade of the former country cannot have advanced at a much less rate. Iron and wollen manufactures have become a great object in Prussia, Germany, France and the Netherlands. Liege has already become the Birmingham of the Low Countries, as Ghent is their Manchester and Glasgow. Striking indications of genius and industry are every where munificently encouraged, especially at St. Petersburg, Berlin, Brussels, Paris, Munich, Stuttgart, and Vienna. The American people would be infatuated, not to provide themselves in like manner with employment; and profitable employment. As things are now situated, we could not live without it.

The prosperity of our manufactures, it is generally conceded, requires for a time, at least, the protection of the general government; and the power and right of the government, if it possesses

the ordinary attributes of sovereignty, to afford that protection, are incontestible. It is a measure of self-defense—an act of justice towards our own citizens against the interference of other nations, to doubt which, is to doubt, whether as a nation, we can attain the ends of the social compact. As Mr. Robbins remarks in the speech whose title we have placed at the head of this article,

“In a country without manufactures, what man in the present state of the world, would embark and hazard his fortune in the undertaking to begin them against the equal competition of other countries, possessing every advantage over him, and ready and willing, and interested to crush the attempt? It would be folly to think of it, for it would be inevitable ruin. In what instance in modern and recent times, I would ask, has any nation ever acquired manufacturing riches without a protecting policy? Why the thing is impossible: in the nature of things it cannot be.”

While this is our own opinion in respect to governmental protection, it is not our province or wish to enlarge upon the topic. We leave that task to others to whom it belongs, and who are able to do it justice.

As to manufactures themselves, we are clear in the conviction, as before intimated, that they are demanded by the common welfare of the country—that with little qualification they may be said to be essential to national independence and security, and that they contribute to the wealth and comfort, and embellishment of the land, in a degree which must be sought in vain from any other pursuit in their room. This conviction is forced upon us by a consideration of the natural resources of the country—the amplitude of its domain, its fertility, its natural treasures, and its means of artificial power by water and by steam. It is forced upon us by a single glance at the capabilities for production, in our large and rapidly increasing population, at their enterprise, and the necessity of finding objects on which those capabilities and that enterprise may be expended. With this consideration, we connect also the aptitude of our countrymen for the mechanic arts—their ingenuity and skill—and their success in the invention of labor-saving machinery. We shall not easily forget the deep and almost melancholy interest, which we personally witnessed in an English manufacturer, who came to this country not long since, for the purpose of inspecting our rising arts, when, upon examining certain specimens of mechanic invention introduced by the “clever yankees,” into a department where his own exertions had been particularly bestowed, he declared that the American market was lost to him forever. We are confirmed also in the general conclusion which we have already drawn, by the expressed opinion of the same authority, that the extensive introduction of manufacturing industry into this country must be expected, as a matter of course, though his interest, and perhaps his judgment, led him to express his doubts, with

respect to any hastening or hot-bed process. We believe, however, that the trial of sixteen years, which have elapsed since the system of protection was more effectually adopted, may authorize us to infer, that the object has not been prosecuted, without a due regard to the growing capacity and taste of the people, for this branch of industry. We are further established in our impressions, by the example of all other civilized and enlightened nations, and by the necessity hence imposed upon us of manufacturing for ourselves, if we would preserve an equality with them in the refinements of life, and would not fall into a state of degrading and dangerous dependence.

Were it our present design to treat the subject chiefly as a political question, or one by which the pecuniary interest and temporal welfare of the nation are affected, we would dwell on such considerations as have been summarily presented above. But as this is not our design, we will add no more on the topic under this view of it, except to introduce a paragraph from the speech of Mr. Robbins, in which he urges the principle that the protecting policy, to whatever extent it may be necessary to introduce it, *should be steadily pursued*. This thought he has illustrated with singular felicity, and we are gratified to adorn the pages of the Christian Spectator with a passage, in which, among other glowing representations, he describes Athenian arts and literature, in the very spirit of Athenian eloquence.

No state, (he says,) ever became great by its policy, but by a steady and persevering pursuit of that policy; and wonderful is the efficacy of such steadiness and perseverance. I beg leave to refer to a few instances. Great Britain owes her astonishing opulence and power to this steadiness of pursuit. It is now about two hundred years, since she began in earnest the policy of securing to her own industry the monopoly of her own markets; and never for a moment has relaxed in the least from the pursuit of that policy. It involved her in one war; but no force without, no complaint, no clamors within, ever induced on her part, any, the least wavering, in the pursuit. The astonishing results I have just now given. Other nations have not profited by the policy, only because they have failed of equal steadiness in the pursuit. With them the policy has been fluctuating; sometimes pursued, and sometimes abandoned, and sometimes relaxed into a judicious tariff. It is hence that they have been thrown so much in the rear of Great Britain. But their eyes are now opened; the scales have fallen from them, they are wide awake to the importance of this policy; and Great Britain can no longer delude them with the fine theory of her Adam Smith, which she recommends to them, but repudiates for herself.

Again: ancient Rome was once an inconsiderable village, on the banks of the Tiber. That village reared itself into a vast empire, embracing the fairest portions of the habitable globe; extending on one line, (as the poet expresses it,)

— A Gadibus usque
Auroram et Gangen:—

from Cadiz to Aurora and the Ganges; on the other from the burning desert of Lybia, to the Danube and the Rhine—an empire of which all present France was but a province, and Great Britain but an appendage of that province. In Europe,

in Asia, in Africa, she saw her eagles, like the delegates of her Jove, bear her thunders in triumph over their subjugated and trembling nations. How is this prodigy to be accounted for? Solely by steadiness of pursuit. That ambitious village proposed to herself the acquisition of military power, and nothing else:—

‘Hæ tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.’

and the whole scheme of her policy had reference to, and was concentrated in, that leading object; and that policy was steadily, and unwaveringly pursued, for seven hundred years. The same policy that progressively reared up this gigantic power against the world, afterwards sustained it for another seven hundred years. The power and the policy fell together. Rome remained invincible, till corruption, after having triumphed over every thing else, came at last to triumph over her military institutions—then Rome fell, and avenged the conquered world by her own suicidal hand.

But the most interesting instance of the efficacy of this steadiness of pursuit, was given by the city of Athens; the most interesting, because the object was most so. From the earliest times, Athens aspired to literature and the elegant arts. They were made, as Montesquieu remarks, a direct and leading object with the government; singular in this respect, and differing from every other. By a steady pursuit of the policy, adopted with a view to this end, the city of Athens became such a monument of the arts, that even her imperfect and dilapidated remains are at this day the wonder of the world. What splendors, then, must she have emitted in the day of her splendor! When, in her freshness, she met the morning sun, and reflected back a rival glory! When she was full of the master pieces of genius in every art—creations that were said to have exalted in the human mind the ideas of the divinities themselves! The fervid eloquence of Demosthenes failed, unequal to the task to do justice to those immortal splendors, when employed, as occasionally it was, for that purpose, in his addresses to the Athenian people. It was by the steady pursuit of the same policy, that their literary works of every kind, (and in every kind they were extremely numerous,) came to be equally the master pieces of human genius, and being more diffused, and less impaired by the injuries of time, than the other monuments of the arts, they were, and still are, more the wonders of the world. They were carried to such a height of perfection, that, after it, the Athenians themselves could never surpass them, while others have never been equal to them. Now, what has been the effect? Literature and the arts have gathered round that city a charm that was and is felt by all mankind; which no distance, no time can dispel. No scholar of any age or clime but has made (in fancy at least) a pilgrimage to its shore; there to call around him the shades of their mighty dead, whose minds still live, and delight and astonish in their immortal works. It is emphatically the city of the heart—where the affections delight to dwell; the green spot of the earth—where the fancy loves to linger. How poor is brute force—even the most magnificent, even the Roman—compared to the empire of mind, to which all other minds pay their voluntary homage. Her literature and her arts acquired to Athens this empire, which her remains still preserve, and always will preserve. In contemplating the phenomenon of her literary achievements, a great and profound writer could not forbear saying, ‘that it seemed a providential event in honor of human nature, to show to what perfection the species might ascend.’ Call it providential, if you please—as every event is, in some sense, providential—but it was the effect of artificial causes; as much so as the military power of the Romans; it was the effect of a policy, early adopted, and always afterwards steadily pursued. I know the opinion that ascribes all this to a peculiar felicity of nature. Horace, I know, says:—

‘Graiiis ingenium; Graiiis dedit ore rotundo
Musa loqui; præter laudem nullius avaris.’

But what gave them that absorbing avarice of fame? It was infused into them by their institutions; it was that one universal sentiment generated by those insti-

tutions, and what he calls the gifts of genius, bestowed by the muses, was the common mind, exalted and refined by the operation and force of the same institutions. It was these which had refined an Athenian mob, as the Athenian people are sometimes called, into an audience of critical taste. The Attic eloquence, called so by way of pre-eminence, was but conformity to the requirements of that taste. Such is the wonderful efficacy of steadiness of pursuit, (as we have seen displayed in those instances,) by a nation pursuing national objects by adequate means.

Turning from these considerations, which are highly interesting to the political economist, we shall direct the attention of our readers to a question of infinitely greater moment in the view of every christian, we mean, the probable *moral influence* of manufactures in this country. We need not say, that many fears have been entertained on this subject. It has generally been supposed that masses of people brought together, as they are in great establishments, from various places, of different sexes, and all ages,—occupied as they are in manual drudgery, with perhaps few opportunities for mental improvement—and exposed to numerous temptations, as large bodies of persons are apt to be, would be highly injurious to the order of society among us—that they would bring in upon us a population dangerous to the peaceful and virtuous habits in which our citizens have been generally educated—that they would be nurseries of ignorance, crime, and brutality of manners, and diffuse a pernicious influence around them. These apprehensions have arisen from the acknowledged character of many of these establishments in foreign countries, particularly in Great Britain. The moral debasement of this class of operatives, their poverty, ignorance, and squalid appearance, connected in idea also with their frequent terrible riots and “turn outs,” were certainly not calculated to make our good citizens greatly in favor of a system, whose effects, there, were so pernicious, in regard to the most important of human interests. We ourselves formerly partook of the common apprehension, especially in consequence of detailed accounts that were given us, in a correspondence from one of the most celebrated of the English manufacturing places, respecting the moral character and habits, of the class of people in question. They were represented to us as being generally without any of the characteristics of good citizens—so ignorant, as to be unable in some instances, to tell the amount of the money which is paid them for their work—so thriftless, as never to gather any property, even in cases where it could be easily done—so dependent, as readily to become the fit tools of any disorganizer, who would wish to excite them to violence—so debased, as to spend the greater part of their scanty earnings in procuring the means of intoxication, or in barbarous amusements—so devoid of principle, as to be prepared to commit, when

opportunity afforded, the most flagrant crimes—inattentive of course, to their families, and regardless of the sabbath, profane, dishonest, shameless,—in short, equally contemptible and wretched. Such were described to be the vast masses of human beings, constituting the manufacturing classes, that crowd the streets and shops of Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, and some thirty or forty other towns in England. In regard to the neglect of education among them, which lies at the foundation of their depraved habits, we have received impressions from ocular proof, that will not easily be effaced from our minds. In some specimens of orthography and composition, in the shape of letters or invoices, which have come into our hands, from those more favored individuals among them, who happened to understand, or who supposed they understood, something of these accomplishments, we have seen enough to set all the rules of gravity at defiance, as well as to convince us how very humble a share of common learning it was their privilege to possess. This is said of the better sort. It surely wanted nothing to make the picture completely disgusting, when we learned the coarseness and vulgarity of the female character, in the connection here contemplated, as exhibited by the sex in their pugilistic combats with each other in the public streets.

But happily for our country, the introduction of manufactures among us, has thus far led to no enormities of this kind. Even the slighter and more common evils incident to the system, (for it cannot be doubted that there are evils incident to it,) have not been felt in any degree sufficient to justify alarm, if indeed to attract attention. No facts have as yet occurred to confirm the fears which were originally entertained in regard to the moral influence of manufactures among us. On the contrary, the results of experience have generally served to allay those fears—in some cases entirely to remove them. It was not indeed strictly correct to infer, that because the manufacturing population of the old world was vicious and degraded, such would of course be the case in the United States. The poverty found in the workshops of Britain, the want of education, the vulgar manners, and corrupt morals, are in a great measure, owing to circumstances which have no necessary connection with the peculiar employment of the laborers. They arise in part from a dense population, the distinctions of rank, oppressive taxes, the high rates of provisions, and the general neglect which all the lower classes have experienced, in respect to their moral and spiritual welfare. The evils to which the manufacturers as a class are exposed, are common to all the laboring classes. It is believed that the character of apprentices and journeymen of the master manufacturers, as to morals and intelligence,

bad as it is, does not differ essentially from that of the vast number who are engaged in mines, or labor on farms, canals, and roads. So that were these persons employed in agriculture or other pursuits, they would still feel all the evils of poverty, and of moral and intellectual debasement, which they now do, and perhaps, in a much greater degree.* They would still be a portion of those two or three millions of miserable beings, who constitute the lower classes, and who remain to be reclaimed, if reclaimed at all, by the power of the gospel—a people whom a recent English writer has characterized, as “more profligate and more perverted than Hindoos.” Let any country possess a large surplus population, and be situated as England is, in other respects, and it will be found, whether the poor labor in the shops of the manufacturer, or on the farm, and public works, that the causes of crime and suffering will not be few. Our own country, if so situated, would not be an exception, even were manufactures and the mechanic arts unknown to it.

The causes, then, which make manufacturing in any instance an evil, do not exist here as they do abroad, and there is every reason to hope that they may never exist here to so great an extent. Though we are liable in time to have a dense population, and already have it in a comparative sense, in some of the States, this only shows the necessity of providing, by a variety of mechanic arts, for the employment of all the people. We need not be afflicted, and cannot, probably, except from a change of our political institutions, with inequality of rank, oppressive taxes, dearness of provisions, or a general neglect of the education and morals of the people. The very structure of our government, and all our social institutions, now in full and successful operation, bear directly against the production of such a result; and it is only through a violent revolution, or monstrous perversion, that we could ever be thrown into the condition of European states. With institutions and circumstances like our own, no occupation of the citizens, provided it is a lawful one, can be conceived to be dangerous, either to public or private happiness. To infer therefore, as many christians and patriots did, from the state of things in England in regard to manufacturers, that we should find a miserable and degraded population in the same class here, was taking quite too much for granted. Like causes indeed produce like effects—but the causes in the present instance were not like.

* One of the most distinguished philanthropists of England stated to the editor of this work, that he had instituted an extensive inquiry into the comparative amount of crime, and especially of impurity, in the manufacturing and the agricultural districts of England, and had found, to his surprize, that the former were decidedly more moral than the latter.

The situation of Great Britain and America was totally dissimilar. There might, therefore, be much danger in the one case, and very little in the other.

In regard to this whole subject, it is undoubtedly a principle, which is applicable to human nature every where, that great masses of men are operated upon more easily for good or for evil, than a scattered population. So far as the pursuit of mechanic art, in the form we are considering, tends to bring people together in large bodies, so far it involves the application of this principle : and as our country, or any portion of it, passes from a sparse to a dense population, we must be prepared to meet the results. It will be the part of wisdom to use every precaution, to obviate any evils which might arise from such a state of things ; and to employ every effort to reap from it, all the advantages of which also it may be made productive. Considered, however, even in this view, we cannot argue with entire confidence, from the effect of manufactures in England, to their effect in the United States. They cannot do so much, either *for* or *against* us, as they might do in so confined a spot as the British Isles. In a country of such vast extent as ours, their operation must be feeble, at least for a long period to come ; though still it may be very powerful. But we have the greatest reason for encouragement, from the character of our population previous to the introduction of manufactures among us. In England, manufactures came into existence among a people, who were previously ignorant, vicious, and debased, employed by master workmen, who, in most cases, cared for nothing but gain. They did not *give* the lower classes this character ; they found them in possession of it—as they certainly must, in every country, where the common people are uneducated and poor. In our country, manufactures have commenced, under far different auspices. They found the population, which would be apt to engage in the pursuit, generally educated, and sober and correct in their moral habits. Thus far, the prosecution of the system, has had no tendency, so far as we can learn, to make them otherwise. On the other hand, we think there are some unequivocal indications, that it is working a positively happy effect. The people who are engaged in these pursuits, are in the midst of us—they are generally our own citizens, though some are foreigners. We know them well, their characters, their habits, the circumstances under which they prosecute their employments, and the influences by which they are liable to be affected. No difficulty therefore can exist, in arriving at the truth in this matter ; nor is it possible that the community can be deceived, in regard to the general moral effects of the system. Reasoning then from our situation as a

people, and in view of facts as they have been hitherto developed, it will not be amiss to point out, what we conceive to be the influence of manufactures on the *social*, the *intellectual*, and the *moral and religious* character of the people—what that influence is, and what it is likely to be, prosecuted as the object has been hitherto.

In making this estimate, we are aware that the influence of manufactures is by no means the same in every place. The plan, according to which our large establishments are managed, varies in some important particulars, in different parts of our country. Some establishments diverge more widely from the English plan than others; and the more widely they thus diverge, the more happy has been the result—the more do they keep clear of the evils experienced abroad, and the more do they effect for the moral welfare of their inmates. The leading characteristic of the English system, and the source of nearly all its evils, is this, that the operatives are employed as *families*, that the whole household are required to enter into the service of the employer—father, mother, sons, and daughters, down to children five or six years of age. On no other condition, we are informed, as a general fact, will the proprietor of any great establishment abroad, provide his workmen with dwellings, or furnish them with employment. He must command the services of all, who can promote his interests. In those cases where work is put out among families to be performed at their own houses, the same principle is adopted as far as possible; and the general result is, that the whole population grow up *manufacturers*, and nothing but manufacturers, from the earliest years of childhood. It is unnecessary to dwell on the consequences of such a state of society; our only object in describing it is to show, that the manufacturing system as it exists in England, is radically different from ours. The first cotton factory established in this country, that at Pawtucket, R. I. being founded by a foreigner, was commenced, it is true, upon the English plan; and the evils of such a commencement have not ceased even to the present hour, to be felt in that flourishing village, though the system, we believe, has been greatly changed. Children are indeed employed to a considerable extent in the establishments of Rhode Island, Connecticut, and the southern part of Massachusetts; but whole families are rarely seen working together, especially the mothers of young children. There is a growing conviction we are informed, among our enlightened manufacturers, that their own permanent interests, as well as the public good, are best consulted by the employment of very few persons in their factories, under the age of ten years. This single fact,

wherever it exists, constitutes a radical distinction between our system and that of the English.

The manufacturing establishments of this country, may be divided into two classes. One of these consists of large companies of monied men, who are satisfied with moderate profits, especially at the commencement of the undertaking; who have almost unlimited resources at command for the extension of their business; and who are laying the foundation of their establishments on a broad scale, with a reference, rather to their permanent prosperity, than to immediate gain. Lowell is an example of this kind, presenting a vast combination of mechanical power, arranged in one harmonious system, and capable of almost indefinite extension, to which the whole of Europe cannot afford a parallel. The proprietors of Lowell, have uniformly acted on the principle, that private interest is best promoted in the long run, by general intelligence and public virtue. They have therefore made it a general rule, that children under twelve years of age, shall not be employed in their factories. They have established very strict regulations for the government of the boarding houses on the several "corporations;" designed to guard the morals of the youth there assembled, to prevent those of different sexes from boarding at the same place, and to secure them against the danger of being thrown into improper families, or connections. It was originally one part of the system at Lowell, that every one employed in the factories, should pay for a seat in some church; nor was the principle abandoned, except at the instance of the best friends of religion in the place, who were satisfied that any appearance of compulsion on such a subject, would prove on the whole, injurious to the cause of vital religion. A large part of the manual labor at Lowell, is performed by females, between the ages of fifteen and thirty, who have entered into the employment, without the slightest thought of continuing in it for life, like the English operatives; and so far are they from being, (as abroad,) a stationary population, that very few of them remain there, unless settled for life in a married state, for a longer period than three or four years. These young women, we are assured, by those who have the fullest means of knowing, have in almost every instance received a good common education before leaving home, and in very many cases, have enjoyed those superior advantages for intellectual improvement, which are furnished by the best academies in the interior of our country. In general, they are daughters of respectable farmers, though in many instances, they belong to families of a higher rank, and have been reduced by the death of their parents, or some untoward circumstance, to rely on their own exertions for support. We are assured by com-

petent judges, that many of them exhibit in conversation, an extent of acquired knowledge, a soundness of judgment, and a refinement of feeling, which would qualify them to fill with credit, almost any station of life. Without supposing these cases to be very numerous, we are authorized to conclude, that such persons must exert a most salutary influence on the body of their associates; and we have been struck, in attending public worship at the churches in Lowell, with the highly respectable appearance of the hundreds upon hundreds of young persons, who are there assembled. We need not say, how immeasurably removed such a body of manufacturers are, from the ignorant, depraved, and drunken population of an English manufacturing village.

The second class of establishments to which we have alluded, are formed on a narrower scale, and with a more direct aim at immediate profit. To the first class belong such factories as those at Dover, Norwich, Nashua, Patterson, Waltham, Ware, etc.; to the last, a multitude of smaller ones scattered throughout our country, and belonging either to a single individual, or more commonly to a company with a capital of one or two hundred thousand dollars. These of course, differ greatly in their management, with the habits and feelings of the proprietors. In many of them the object being immediate profit, every other consideration is lost sight of by the overseer, in the desire of making yearly a large dividend. Young children are extensively employed in establishments of this kind, and in many cases we doubt not, the evils resulting from manufactures in England, are experienced to a limited extent in the neighborhood of such factories. Still we have reason to believe, that in numerous instances, smaller establishments of this kind, being under the control of men of sound moral and religious principles, are conducted with a wise and constant reference to the best interests of those employed. In other cases, we have reason to know, men who lay no claim to evangelical feelings, have been so thoroughly convinced of the advantages to be derived from the prevalence, not only of moral, but decidedly religious principles among their workmen, that they have adopted regulations on the subject, which might put to shame many professors of religion, who are proprietors or overseers of manufacturing establishments. As an instance we might mention a factory in New England, owned by two gentlemen, whose views of religion are widely different from our own, who have nevertheless erected a church and employed a clergyman of the congregational order, and established a system of regulations for their workmen, of which the following is a brief outline.

“No family shall be permitted to reside on this corporation,
VOL. IV.

by whom spirituous liquors are used, or offered to others, except in case of sickness.

“No profane or impure language can ever be allowed, either in the factory buildings, or in private houses.

“Every family, in all its branches, shall regularly attend church twice on the sabbath, unless prevented by ill-health.

“The children of all the families employed, shall attend the sabbath school.

“The children employed in the factory shall be divided into four classes, each of which successively shall be withdrawn from labor, and placed at the village school, during three months of the year.”

A printed statement of these regulations is handed to every person who applies for employment in the factory; and though some are deterred from remaining by the strictness of the rules, the proprietors, we are assured, have found no difficulty in obtaining the best of workmen on these conditions.

We are perfectly aware, that there is much to be set off against these statements, in the case of other and far different establishments. Still we are convinced, as the result of extensive inquiries on the subject, that our manufacturers as a body, are becoming satisfied by such examples, that “godliness has the promise of the life that now is,” and we are sure that their influence and authority may be enlisted to a far greater extent on the side of sound morals among their workmen, if the religious public adopt wise and efficient means to secure so desirable an object.

With this summary view of the management of our manufacturing establishments, we submit in regard to their influence, *first*, on the *social character* of the people, whether, taking the country at large, they can be at all unfavorable, and if this management continues whether they *ever* will be? Compared with manufacturing and mechanical pursuits abroad, do they not rather tend to the improvement of society among us? In reference to this point there are many circumstances in our favor, a few of which may be noticed in detail.

One obvious circumstance is, that the time of work required in our manufactories, is shorter than it is in other countries—in England, for instance. From ten to twelve hours, we believe, is the extent here; whereas in the foreign workshops, two, and sometimes three hours are added to this amount. It has recently been stated in England, at a public meeting on the subject, that *children* in certain of their worsted factories, are obliged to work from twelve to fourteen hours a day, and sometimes even fifteen, affording no period for rest except at night, and but an half hour for meals. The comparative shortness of the term of labor in our es-

tablishments, is a matter of no small importance, and will tend, by affording opportunities for needful relaxation, and intellectual improvement, to prevent the debilitating bodily and mental effects, that arise from prolonged and incessant toil. In confirmation of this, we have ascertained by extensive inquiries, that the health of our manufacturing villages, is equal to that of the country at large.

Next, the standard of conduct and attainments is higher, in the class of our citizens here spoken of, than it is in the manufacturing population of England. More in these respects is expected and required of our artisans, in consonance with the generally steady habits of the community, and with the share of information which is here extensively possessed. Our systems of public education do much for us, before we go to the labors of the loom, of the farm, or of the sea. To fall greatly short of the common standard, either in morals or learning, would be a certain method in many places, of throwing one out of regular employment. While the general standard of conduct and attainments, though not so high as it might be, is respectable and far superior to that known in foreign countries, the social character of the people can receive no such detriment in the workshop of the mechanic, as would bring it into unfavorable comparison with society in other laborious employments. The same kindly influence, in this respect, would be felt in the crowded resorts of manufacturing industry, as is felt elsewhere, and perhaps to a greater extent.

Again, there is in our population generally, a strong disposition to rise above their station. The classes of people who rely, for their livelihood, on manual labor and personal exertions, are always aiming at a condition of independence. Efforts of this kind are peculiarly favored by the genius of our government, and by the common course of events. Wealth and a fair character, some one has remarked, constitute a *title* in America. Hence the eagerness which marks the pursuit of property in every class, and the acquisition of a good name also, though the latter with less universality. An American never consents to serve, but with a view to obtain the means of becoming a master, in his turn. In England, a servant, a day laborer, or a common journeyman, expects always to remain such. Expectations so different, must produce very different results on the character, and variously affect the social condition. That on the part of the American they must be favorable, no one can doubt. Such a result is realized as much in a manufacturer's shop, as it is in any other scene of labor. Connected with this fact, is the *opportunity*, always presented among us for change of situation. If a man does not succeed in one line of life or of exertion, another lies before him. A vast field of enterprise is spread out in so extensive a country; and such is the bearing of

our institutions that by means of talent, diligence, and virtue, the humblest lad in our manufactories—the poor son of a day laborer, may aspire to distinction, and even to the highest official station. To many a youth in obscurity, this incentive has been addressed with a force, that has elicited, if not created, talents and civic virtues of the first order—talents and virtues which have met their appropriate reward. Even the poor foreigner, if he evinces talents and worth, may here change his situation of service for a better place, and may build up his fortune himself. An instance of this kind was pointed out to us in an important factory, where a foreigner rose from the condition of a common laborer to the ownership of part of the establishment,—a change of condition which he probably would never have experienced at home. Under so favorable an influence in respect to our social character, have our manufactures grown up, and we believe they are destined to prolong that influence. In respect to the *female* portion of our manufacturing population, it is certain that they are not excluded from the advantage which has been mentioned, according to the sphere in which they are fitted to move. The opportunities of improving their situation by change, occur with the same frequency and certainty, as they do in the other classes of the sex, in other walks of industry. It has recently been ascertained, by a careful inquiry at some of the principal establishments in the country, that to the unmarried female residents among them, the prospects of a comfortable settlement for life, are quite as great as they are to those of this class in other situations.

We may add to all the above, that the *force of public opinion* is much in our favor on this point, because it generally is in favor of social order, and the charities of life. Were there even a disposition in the establishments spoken of, to encroach on this order, and these charities, it could not effect its object. Public opinion would put it down. That opinion, in a sense, is irresistible, and all must conform to it in reality or appearance, or be excluded from the benefit of its friendly and efficient support. While public sentiment has thus a propitious influence on the interests in question, setting them right where they might be inclined to go wrong; it receives aid and countenance from them in return; and through the exertions of master manufacturers, whose reputation with the public is at stake, and whose pecuniary advantage happily coincides with their responsibility, social life will even improve under the system. We venture to say, that it has so improved already.

The consideration of the influence of manufactures, on the *intellectual character of the people*, next demands our attention. We have necessarily anticipated a part of what might be said on this topic, since much that affects the intellectual character of the

people, results from their social condition. A few things, however, may be distinctly remarked in this place. The whole of our political and social system, aims at making a body of enlightened citizens, and this as a means of preserving a republican form of government. In this respect, we have a decided advantage over nations differently situated, as to all the great branches of business. General intelligence exists. The public mind is enlightened, at least, in a comparative sense, and men enter upon their several pursuits with a proper understanding of the objects to be secured, and of the means of securing them. This intelligence runs through all the departments of exertion, and affects the manufacturing as well as every other profession. Each individual, even in this employment acts his part from choice, allured by his love of gain, or desire of respectability; and with an adequate discernment of the nature of his agency, aims at the production of the given result. This is not the case, at least, to such an extent, in foreign countries. On the part of many of their master manufacturers, it has seemed to be a settled opinion, that the less like intelligent beings—the more like brutes or machines, the operatives could be made, the more profitable they would be as workmen. They were at all events to be kept down, and ignorant, and oppressed, they were never to be suffered to aspire after intelligence and self-control. Such a plan in this country would be as impracticable at present, as it would be eventually ruinous. With the sense which the people have of their rights and privileges, it would not be submitted to. They cannot, except by their own choice, become the victims of ignorance and oppression. Such a state of things might, indeed, be brought upon our country by degrees, and in the progress of national degeneracy; but in this event, the structure of our government would be changed, and our liberty and institutions would depart with the spirit of intelligence.

The foundation of this spirit lies in the simple circumstance, that *all the people know how to read*. We make the statement in this unqualified manner, because the exceptions to this fact, particularly in New England, are too few to be noticed. Here are embodied all the elements of knowledge by which the public mind is illuminated. The primer and the spelling book have made us a nation of readers. The basis is thus laid of that competency of understanding and learning which distinguishes the generality of the people. Our manufactories furnish no real exception to the fact of this general diffusion of knowledge among the community. In the majority of cases, the children taken into these establishments, have arrived at an age, in which they have acquired an ordinary school education. Where this is not the fact, they are sent to school during a part of the year, or are otherwise instructed in the neces-

sary branches. It has been stated to us, on good authority, that children, in some factories, receive more attention in respect to their education, than they would be apt to receive at home. We have alluded to the plan pursued in one establishment. Others, as efficiently perhaps, pursue the same object. The population of which we speak, are certainly not oftener neglected, in this respect, than others: and if a comparison were drawn between the children in the manufacturing villages, with those in agricultural districts, we should find no advantage on the part of the latter. On the other hand, it is apprehended that the superiority, would, in a multitude of cases, be found on the side of the former—especially in the instances, where the modern measures of improvement are adopted. For the successful operation of these measures, a compact population affords peculiar facilities. The fact is, that the means of instruction are accessible to all; and the question whether much or little is effected, is determined by the degree of vigor with which the system is pursued. Undoubtedly in many instances, a greater amount of effort ought to be put forth in the manufacturing towns and villages, in the cause of education, both on the part of the public authorities and master manufacturers. Still if we are not greatly deceived, the importance of this object is felt with increasing interest. We know of much that has been done in regard to education in these places, and praise-worthy examples of individual master manufacturers might be pointed out, if it were deemed expedient.

While the spirit of intelligence is founded on the simple ability of all the people to read, it is strengthened and expanded in this free country, by an immense variety of means and incentives. These of course cannot be particularly described. One of them, however, shall be briefly noticed. In addition to innumerable institutions for learning—lower and higher schools, academies, colleges, and seminaries for professional education—the gymnasium, the lyceum, and the debating society, we have the daily, semi-weekly, or weekly vehicle of intelligence—the newspaper—diffused as it can be no where else, throughout the whole nation, to the most distant hamlet, and the obscurest family—universally diffused because it can be universally read. This, in the variety of its design and character, whether as secular, religious, or literary, or the whole combined, is equal to every other means of information, and especially among the common people. The scene of the manufacturer's and mechanic's labors, feels in full proportion this powerful influence; and were there any tendency in their circumstances and employments to shut out from them the light of knowledge, the newspaper alone would suffice to counteract it. There is, however, no such tendency among this description of people in our land. On the con-

trary, we have remarked in individuals whom we have known, the tendency of mechanical pursuits, to develope talent, and impart a taste for knowledge. It is not to be doubted that this is extensively the fact. The disposition for inquiry and investigation, in this class of our citizens, may be expected indeed to be more than usually powerful, where the rewards of their ingenuity are sure, and the field of enterprise is boundless.

The general effect of manufacturing and mechanical arts, must be the intellectual advancement of a people. They have had such an effect on the nations of modern Europe, though it might have been more extensive, or have embraced larger portions of their population, had their institutions been felicitous in other respects. They have done much to create that superiority which is visible in European intellect, and of which so many memorials exist in every quarter of the globe. In this sentiment, we are supported by a single passage in the Report of the Committee on Manufactures, which we will introduce to the notice of our readers.

It is by their improvement in the mechanic arts, (says Mr. Adams,) and by their application to manufactures, that the modern nations of Europe surpass so far those of the other quarters of the globe. It would be no exaggerated estimate to say that the very recent inventions of the steam-boat, and of the railway, have opened avenues of power to the nations possessing them, which their neighbors could not permit them exclusively to enjoy, and retain, without sinking into a state of defenseless inferiority before them. The steam-boat is an invention of our own country; the railway is a corresponding achievement of European ingenuity, which we are enabled to appropriate to our own uses, and the immensity of the continent which we inhabit, and the still multiplying millions of our posterity, which for long ages will continue to swarm upon its surface, and the governments under which we live, and the freedom of thought, and of speech, and of action which we enjoy, seem as if adapted by the beneficent hand of Providence, all to each other, for the advancement of the welfare of human kind.

If the arts we have spoken of have done so much for the advancement of knowledge and improvement in Europe, under institutions which in some respects have operated unfavorably, keeping the lower orders in a state of ignorance; how much will they not do, in a nation with institutions, which, in every respect, are designed to raise the great body of the people to the possession of intelligence? A nation, like our own, is in a situation to be benefited by manufacturing and mechanic arts, in an eminent degree. Give us time and experience, and under the auspices by which we have been hitherto conducted, it is but fair to infer, that the fruits will be happier than other ages and other countries have dared to anticipate. The knowledge, improvements, conveniences, and comforts of the people, must be multiplied to an extent which it is now difficult adequately to conceive. The advancement also of the fine arts, and an increasing taste for them among the people, will be the natural consequence.

The influence of manufactures on the *moral* and *religious character* of our nation, remains to be considered. The effect they are producing, and may be expected to produce in this respect, is a subject deeply interesting to the patriot and the christian. It would be desirable to present it in its entire features, but we can furnish little more than an outline of our reflections and inquiries, in reference to this vital point:

All are aware of the power of example and sympathy in large and compact bodies of people, especially where they have a common interest. Potent every where, these principles under such circumstances, are nearly irresistible. The same impulse can be communicated to all—is felt by all. It cannot be necessary to refer to an Athenian rabble, which could control the measures of government almost at its pleasure, and cause the banishment of any distinguished citizen it wished to remove—or to the plebeians of Rome, who, at periods, held the fortunes of the empire in their hands—or to the populace of Paris, which, when simultaneously excited, has overturned thrones, and beheaded or exiled kings. We see the influence of example and the contagion of sympathy in every legislative hall, in every college, in every manufactory, in every village school. Though as already intimated, persons in this situation may be easily excited to evil, they may also be easily excited to good—under favorable influences, to immense good. The congregated masses in our manufacturing places, are in a situation as propitious, perhaps, as any in which large bodies of mankind are ever assembled, to be thus impelled. Good examples here presented, will be followed by thousands. A salutary influence may be exerted by means of these thousands, on other thousands who are rapidly passing through such establishments. This, through the kind providence of God, is what we are permitted to see, actually taking place, in a great number of instances. The revivals of religion with which our land has of late been blessed, have affected manufacturing places, in a large proportion of instances, and with wonderful power. The gospel, in its ministrations, has been signally prospered in these crowded resorts, and the principle of example and sympathy has been seized upon by good men, for the advancement of the best of causes, and seconded by the influences of the Holy Spirit, has operated to the conversion of great multitudes. Children and youth, as well as adults, have largely participated in the work. To give a list of the places would be to mention most of the manufacturing towns, at least in New-England. It may be proper, however, to refer to a few places by name, as examples. Norwich, in this state, has been signally blessed in the particular now mentioned; and its manufacturing population have experienced, in a

remarkable manner, the happy influence of such visitations. This is also the case with Bozrahville in the same vicinity. Meriden, New Britain, and Manchester, in this state, and Nashua and Dover in New Hampshire, have been greatly favored in their manufacturing population, of late years, with the heavenly influences of grace. Lowell, in Massachusetts, containing 10,000 souls, chiefly manufacturers, numbers 2,000 evangelical professors of religion,—a greater proportion than can be found in almost any place in this country. It has enjoyed for three years, an almost constant revival of religion. No spot in the Union, has been more signally marked by the blessing of heaven, or has more satisfactorily illustrated the principle, that large masses of people, under favorable influences, may be conducted to great good. We do not mean to intimate however, that Lowell is not still the seat of great corruption both in doctrine and practice. On the contrary, we are perfectly aware, that universalism and other forms of a spurious christianity, with their appropriate moral influence, have there come forth with unblushing effrontery, in the face of day. The state of society is one, which brings the elements of good and evil into perpetual and violent collision; and the result has been, that the cause of evangelical truth has triumphed gloriously. It is an interesting consideration too, that large numbers entering and leaving such places every year, and participating in these gracious visitations, greatly multiply a pious population in the country round. When they go thence, as many do after a residence of three or four years, they carry to their new abodes, the spirit they have imbibed, and thus become the instruments of producing an interest on the subject of religion, among other collections of people, and of scattering the seed of grace far and near.

This state of things, showing that the influences which affect us are very different in general from those which affect other nations, is the natural result of causes like the following, and to be expected so long as the system shall be prosecuted.

First, large numbers of our factories, as we have before intimated, are owned or conducted by pious men, distinguished as promoters of vital religion and benevolent operations, as patrons of the ministry, advocates of temperance measures, and observers of the sabbath. These, of course, will seek with a solicitude exceeding that which any pecuniary interest can awaken, the best condition of their establishments, in a moral and religious point of view. Their attention to the spiritual welfare and religious improvement of their workmen, will be secured by the infinite, intrinsic value of the object, seconded also by the additional consideration of secular advantage. Hence they will naturally be led to the maintenance of order, regularity, temperance, and

religious worship, in their establishments. The aid of the ministry will of necessity be sought, and all its sacred influence applied in relation to these objects. Now, these things are actually done and are doing on an extensive scale, and in a most commendable spirit at many of the seats of manufactures. In addition to the ordinary facilities for public religious worship and conference, the opportunities afforded at the large boarding houses which exist in connection with these establishments, for the benevolent operations of the ministry, are peculiarly inviting. In many places, we understand, these houses are frequently visited by the clergy, at the invitation of their keepers, who, through personal conversation with the boarders, have been happily successful in urging upon them the claims of religion. Moreover, the solicitude which exists on the part of pious master manufacturers, induces them to exercise a due degree of care in the selection of workmen, and some, we know, and many more we have reason to believe, are in the habit of receiving none, except such as sustain the reputation of a correct moral deportment.

Next, in the instances where the heads of manufacturing establishments do not profess to be pious men, there are many among them, who know that revivals of religion produce a good effect on workmen, and that it is both more pleasant and more profitable to employ persons actuated by religious principles and the fear of God, than those of a contrary description. Revivals, sabbath schools, &c. are therefore favored in their establishments, if not chiefly as a moral and spiritual good, yet as having a tendency to advance the direct object of those establishments. Many master manufacturers too, whose private views of religion, would lead to a very different course, accede to measures taken among their laborers, to promote religious reformation: and whatever they may think of the results in other respects, they seem to be convinced that the operation of evangelical piety is altogether favorable to order, decency, sobriety, diligence, and honesty.

Again, the zeal of the different denominations of christians, induces them to do much and attempt more, in behalf of the spiritual interests of people collected in manufactories. A healthful moral and religious action, may therefore be expected, for the most part, among them, especially if efforts shall continue to be put forth, as they have been hitherto. In many respects, a praise-worthy emulation has been exhibited in promoting the prosperity of the gospel in these places, by all of the more evangelical sects. Each one chooses to take care of the spiritual interests of its own adherents; and the attempts of employers to interfere with the religious opin-

ions of their workmen, or to control them on this subject, merely to gain accessions to party, are watched with no little jealousy. Each sect in the land is, indeed, making efforts for the prosperity of its own order, whether in these places, or elsewhere. But the ratio of exertion and success, it is believed, is greatly in favor of the evangelical denominations. They are certainly gaining more force constantly in manufactories. Such is the operation of different christian sects among us, in regard to these important, and rising, and multiplying institutions. The tendency of success on the part of one denomination, is to excite and encourage the others—and thus efforts are augmented, and most of these compact masses of human beings, may be effectually reached by the ordinary means of grace. In this result, by which the tendency to sloth and inaction in one denomination, when it occupies securely the whole field, is arrested, we may see the wisdom of God, in suffering the diversity of sects, and in overruling that diversity, for the purposes of his own glory and the salvation of men.

The reasonings and facts which have been submitted above, are sufficient, we think, to account for the state of things among us, in regard to manufactures, and to authorize the hope, that their moral influence in this country will on the whole, be favorable. Still, it should be remembered, that there *are great and manifold dangers* in the career on which we are entering; and that nothing but the most watchful care and self-denying effort on the part of the christian community, can avert from us the evils which have resulted in other countries, from an extended system of manufactures, or secure to us the benefits which such a system is adapted to produce. We have incidentally touched on some important measures and principles to be applied to the case. These we would present to the reader a little more distinctly, and mention two or three others, in addition.

In this connection, too much importance cannot be attached to the *temperance reform*, which has been so happily commenced and carried on in this country. This is one of our advantages for the prosecution of manufactures, the want of which would be terribly felt, whatever other means should be employed to promote knowledge, virtue, and religion, in the places of mechanical business. In these places, the aspect of things is essentially altered, by means of the temperance reform. The common use of ardent spirits amidst a population so dense, and of course easily moved by a common impulse, would infuriate and stultify thousands, who would otherwise be peaceable and ingenious workmen. It becomes every owner or conductor of a manufacturing establishment, to see that this article is excluded from it, by a re-

gard alike for his own interest, and the interest of the community. We are assured that such is the fact in many establishments. The christian public ought not to rest until *entire abstinence* is written on every factory in our land.

The *observance of the Sabbath*, should receive the most marked attention, in all places of manufacturing business. Perhaps the greatest danger to morals and religion, resulting from this employment, lies in the temptations which it addresses to those who are engaged in it, to violate the sabbath. In places otherwise well regulated, the operatives too often use the sabbath rather as a season of mere cessation from care and labor, or of moderate recreation, such as walking and riding in the country round, than as time to be consecrated to God, and to religious improvement. The constant confinement and drudgery of the week days, supplies the inducement they feel, or the pretext which they urge, in respect to this indulgence. But they forget that the divinely appointed services of the sabbath, are designed as the highest, and best, and most grateful refreshment, both of the body and the mind of man. Christians indeed, who love this sacred day and its employments, will not be found among the violators, or neglecters of the sabbath, but no effort should be spared to reclaim from so dangerous a habit, every one who has the least regard for his own character, or the moral interests of the community. The profanation of holy time, ruinous to the souls of men every where, is emphatically so in these crowded resorts, where example is pre-eminently contagious and powerful. For this reason, as well as its intrinsic excellence, and immutable obligations, the christian sabbath should be zealously guarded against profanation, by all who have the control of workmen, or who can, in any degree, influence their conduct.

Sabbath Schools are pre-eminently important in a manufacturing community, calculated as they are to enforce the better observance of the day, and to do infinite good to the rising generation. Salutary as their tendency may be elsewhere, they are singularly advantageous here. The nature of the institution, as well as the results of experience, go to prove, that, more than any other human contrivance, (if it is human,) they prepare the young for those habits of obedience, diligence, and regularity, by which they are managed with ease, and their labor rendered productive, to their employers. Such indeed is their general effect, wherever established. Those therefore, who have large numbers of young persons in their service, would find it altogether conducive to their personal comfort and pecuniary advantage, to maintain sabbath school instruction among them, aside from answering the nobler purpose of benefitting immortal minds. Where

competent teachers are wanting, what employment could be more useful or animating to christians in the surrounding neighborhood, than to repair on the sabbath, as instructors to these new centers of population, which are every where forming in our land? Let it never be said, that our churches are slumbering over the interests of the thousand communities which are bursting into life among us, fraught with the destinies of unborn millions—perhaps with the destiny of our country.

In the new villages which are springing up under the influence of manufactures, we have a pressing call for *home missions*: and they who are charged with this object, should see that these places are, from the beginning, adequately supplied with the preached word. Much care and foresight must be exercised, or before we are aware, these young seats of enterprise, so rapid is their growth, will have advanced in size and population, far beyond the ratio of their religious privileges and means. So fast are our centers of business changing, that the christian philanthropist needs to be on the alert, that he may adapt his measures to the new forms and the new places, in which the irrepressible energies of freemen, are continually developed. Let, then, these centers of business, as fast as they rise, become each the seat of churches, and a nucleus of a widely extended evangelical influence. With pleasure we record the fact, that in many instances, they have been made such; and it only requires the application of the gospel in the form here mentioned, and to the desired extent, to render them all the very "*locos lætos*" of the Spirit's residence.

The highly promiscuous collections of people in manufacturing sites, call urgently also for a *kind and catholic spirit, among the different christian sects*. They who have a common bond of evangelical feeling and action, though called by different names, should make much of that bond, and little of their distinctive appellations, in circumstances where they must necessarily have a constant intercourse with one another. In such a situation, to contend about minor points, would be destructive not only to social enjoyment, but to kind and right feeling. It would result in a partial sacrifice at least, of those principles in which all christians are agreed, and a disastrous failure to recommend christianity, in its grand characteristic excellence. How studiously ought all sectarian feelings to be repressed in places, where the responsibility of a child of God is measured by the number of eyes that are daily upon him, and the number of souls whose moral character is forming under his influence. Infinitely better would it be, for the different classes of christians so brought together, to sacrifice their different titles, and party prejudices, than to put in

jeopardy their common christianity, and their common and blessed privilege of urging its claims.

In addition to the above, a redeeming influence which may be applied to the seats of manufacturing art, is the *missionary spirit of our age and country*. Not only should they be made, especially in their early foundation the *objects* of missionary labors, as before insisted on ; but they may become, in their turn, each a sort of missionary society, in which, by that concerted action so easy for them to maintain, they might happily promote the common objects of benevolence, and aid in the dissemination of the gospel. An engagement in these heavenly designs, so far as is compatible with their secular labors, would raise the standard of morals and piety in the manufacturing classes, as it has raised this standard, in every part of the christian community, where such designs have been conceived and executed.

That it is the interest and duty, of those who control our manufacturing establishments to promote the various means of improvement which we have pointed out, will not admit of a question ; and in view of the solemn responsibilities which rest upon them, a strong appeal might be made to their best feelings for a hearty co-operation in so noble a cause. Our limits however will permit us only to say, that if they would avert the moral evils, which were once generally supposed to result from manufacturing pursuits, and the fear of which doubtless lingers in some minds at the present time—if they would secure the benefits which may be derived from them in regard to the social, intellectual, and moral and religious character of the people—if they would disarm the prejudices which have been awakened in the minds of many well meaning people, who have not become familiar with their results,—and if they would hope to reconcile those, who have opposed the system from interested and pecuniary views, they must enter heartily into measures and principles of the kind that have been here pointed out. A practical refutation, in this case, will be afforded of most of the objections that have been made to manufactures, so far as they have been sanctioned by the general government, or sustained by the enterprise of individual citizens. And this, after all, is the best way of convincing its enemies of the beneficial nature of the system in its several bearings. Let it then be seen, through such exertions as are requisite for the purpose, how much good can be achieved in the midst of these seats of ingenuity and industry—that not only large, and flourishing, and opulent villages are reared, where the beauties of architecture are spread around ; and taste, and convenience, and plenty spring up by the side of the manufacturer's shop—but that the charities of life, pure morality, and revivals of religion, follow in their train. Especially should the reproach be taken away

from these pursuits at the present day, which poetry and inspiration have fastened on the artificers of the primeval world, that

“Studious they appear
Of arts that polish life; inventors rare;
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them.”

The interests of our country in reference to its manufacturing and other pursuits, present very solemn claims to the attention of all, who glory in it as their birth place and their home. It was our design to connect with this discussion some miscellaneous remarks on the state of the country, viewed in the aspect in which it offers itself to the minds of christians, at the present crisis. The spirit of moderation which should characterize our public councils; the evils of domestic factions; the great principle of a republic that a majority must rule; the necessity of yielding obedience to the laws; the peculiar duty of christians, by a peaceable, yet firm deportment, by prayer, and by the hidden exercise of spiritual religion, to seek the good of their country, were among the topics which we thought appropriate to the time and the occasion. But our limits permit us only to say, respecting the present agitated state of the nation, that our fears for the republic have been great amidst all our hopes and exultation, not in view merely of the system which has now been dwelt upon, or any particular measure to which the majority of the people may give their sanction; but in view of the feelings by which *every plan* of general policy is sure to be resisted. Our astonishment has been immeasurably excited, at the spirit which is manifested among us, by minorities, let the scale turn on what political side it may, as if they were determined to be—

“rebel to all law.”

The spirit of insubordination among the people of other governments, (perhaps we use too harsh a term, and we are willing to call it in *them* a struggle for just rights,) has seemed to reach our shores—as if any among us had the same ground of uneasiness—as if where all have a voice in the government, and where a properly constituted majority is the rule of action, the disappointments of a minority could ever justify the resistance which a people make, who have no voice in theirs; a resistance in the latter, whose object is not so much to set aside laws, as to obtain the equal privilege of making them. A spirit of insubordination has seized upon a people, who, having tasted the sweets of liberty, seem to be satiated with the draught, and would now dash it from their lips—who having enjoyed fifty years of union and prosperity, deem it a period sufficiently long in which to be happy. At a time when there should be nothing but gratulation and mutual good will among the people,

in view for instance of the extinction of the national debt, how deplorable, how ominous, is the determination exhibited by many, to cast off entirely the small impost which is necessary for the protection of those physical, intellectual, and moral improvements which it becomes all nations to make ! Well might Mr. Adams in his Report, speaking of the national achievements, under circumstances of comparative difficulty and trial, observe with his characteristic felicity and energy,

And while all this has been accomplished, the nation has been advancing in population, in wealth, in physical and intellectual cultivation, in all the elements that constitute the prosperity of nations. What sudden blast of lightning from heaven could strike with more fatal blindness—what inconceivable infatuation must lay prostrate all the faculties of our souls, were we capable of seizing the very moment of liberation from the heaviest burdens we have borne, to throw off all those which are but the stores of seed, to be sown and cultivated into harvests of future plenty ?

It would truly be a most melancholy comment on the best human institutions and the highest human happiness, if we must become divided and imbecile, when it would seem to be within our reach to be more united and powerful than ever—if we must sink into dishonor and infamy, when never before was it apparently so easy to consummate our greatness—if we must consent to loose the advantage of that providential preparation in the benevolent movements of the day, by which the interests of virtue and piety might be signally advanced, among so large a portion of the human family—if all this experiment of a republican government must fail, when it might be established on an unshaken basis—and if our whole example must be lost to mankind, when it might be made to speak with effect through every coming age. But all these must take place, not because majorities are liable to enact laws which are disliked by minorities, for this will often happen, and we could not possess a representative government without a subjection to such a contingency ; but it must take place, if minorities will not peaceably yield the point that majorities shall govern—if they will not voluntarily submit to the decisions of law—if a spirit of menace and resistance be cherished among any considerable portion of the people. Nor will such a state of things stop here. Regular constitutional government having failed, and the country being no longer a country of laws, the fury of passion will impel us to force and violence ; and as the ultimate result, all history shows that the supreme power will be siezed by a bloody triumvirate, or directory, or by a single fortunate adventurer. Let the people solemnly consider the disastrous tendency of violent factions, and decide whether they are prepared, for the sake of party triumph or sectional interest, to sacrifice their noblest inheritance—the union of these states, the integrity of our common country.

We cannot for a moment reconcile it with christian principle, that they who are called the disciples of Christ, should by word or deed, sanction any such proceedings as those to which we have adverted. We can perceive—we can admit no real claim to the possession of the spirit of christianity, in refusing obedience to the laws of the land. Except in the single instance, where the laws require that to be done which is morally wrong, or to be omitted which moral obligation demands, we hold it to be incompatible with true subjection to the gospel, to *refuse* subjection to “the powers that be.” Under our government, inclination, party, or interest has nothing to interpose but the constitutional remedy—and that is the ballot box. *In foro conscientiae* we have no other rectifier, and this it is believed, always will correct abuses, on whatever side the wrong may lie; for who can admit, among the people at large, a disposition to oppress any portion of the land? On the whole, “we are persuaded better things” concerning our country, though we have thus spoken. The time, the occasion, the crisis, the character of the nation, seems to require something by way of caution and remonstrance, from every pen. It seemed to us to require something even from ours.

ART. III.—CAUSES WHICH HAVE IMPEDED THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY.

EIGHTEEN hundred years have passed away, since the command was given, “go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and yet there is not to be found on our globe one whole nation in possession of the word of God; not one whole nation blessed with the ministry of reconciliation; not one nation under heaven in the full enjoyment of the light, knowledge, and glory of the gospel. We speak of christendom; and we hear nations exclaiming with the people of Israel, “we are wise and the law of the Lord is with us,” while its want of efficacy renders the reply of the prophet fearfully appropriate, “Surely in vain hath he made it—the pen of the scribes is in vain.” Were there presented to our view a faithful summary of all the wrongs to be redressed, ignorance to be enlightened, error to be controverted, vices and oppression to be done away, and heathenism to be reclaimed in nations which are called christian—nothing but the everlasting arms could uphold us from despair. We are accustomed to speak of our own land as the most favored of God. Fix your eye steadily upon it, and you see no narrow field for missionary enterprise. A population outgrowing its moral and religious institutions, errors coming in like a flood and the love of many waxing cold, impiety with its rep-

tile meanness, and infidelity with its daring effrontery, covering some portions of our land with more loathsome plagues than ever rested upon the land of Egypt—multitudes without a bible, multitudes more, destitute of a proper ministry—two millions the victims of a slavery whose “iron entereth into the soul,”—hordes of savages in the most abject state of heathenism.

If we turn to Europe, we see religion well nigh become extinct, by an unnatural alliance with civil power and secular interests. The crown was placed upon the head of christianity, while the knee was bent in solemn mockery; she was decked with a robe of purple and spit upon; endowed with the scepter of pretended empire wherewith she was smitten. Amid the most imposing magnificence, we have here witnessed the ‘melancholy spectacle of religion lying in state, and surrounded by the silent pomp of death.’ There are churches enough in Europe—the mighty dead sleep beneath them, and marble statues are within them, but the living are not there. Millions of thoughtless beings are sleeping the sleep of death in the arms of an establishment, ignorant of every thing which pertains to vital godliness, save when it is held up to ridicule and contempt by a hireling clergy. To a large part of the people, that bible, to open whose promises the Lamb offered up his blood, is a sealed book; and millions by means of a perverted religion, are rendered far more hopeless than the ignorant, unprejudiced heathen. The vacant soul of the savage may be filled with rapture at the story of redemption, the shivering bosom of the Greenlander may be warmed with the love of Christ, and charmed with the novelty and tenderness of a tale, which breaks in upon their benighted souls, sudden and unexpected. But the ignorant catholic clings to his unmeaning formalities with sinews stronger than steel. But were christendom what it ought to be, it would bear no greater proportion to the mass of mankind, who are in the most abject state of heathenism, than the surface of the ocean which receives the light and the breeze, to the unfathomable depths which remain dark and unstirred beneath it. That sun which on every returning sabbath smiles on the people of God, as it rises in the east, and passes slowly through heaven, witnesses scenes of human guilt and wretchedness, sufficient to quench its luster in endless night. Millions prostrate themselves in blind adoration to the sun as to God, of whose glory it is but the faintest emblem. It absorbs the fire of human sacrifices: its light falls on the minarets of a thousand mosques, crowded with the victims of imposture—upon the pagodas of India—those “outer chambers of hell,” and on the numberless temples where nameless idols are worshiped in bloody and obscene orgies—all piercing the skies as so many provocations to call down the wrath of God. The voice of lamentation and woe

ascends to heaven in every breath of air ; and in all the length and breadth of the world in which we live, oppression and cruelty, ignorance, superstition and crime hold almost an undisturbed dominion. "Such is earth's melancholy map." *The whole creation groaneth to be delivered from the bondage of corruption.*

The inquiry spontaneously arises, why is it that the gospel exerts an agency so narrow and limited? Why is the knowledge of it confined to such an insignificant portion of mankind, while millions are perishing for lack of it? What are the causes which have impeded christian enterprise?

Men who believe that the world is to be converted by human agency—by a process of efficient means, see no cause for surprise in the present limited extension of christianity. The church has seldom acted upon this principle, since the days of the apostles. She has mistaken the nature of her duty. Her warfare is designed to be aggressive. She is to go forth conquering and to conquer. Yet it is an undeniable fact, that her mightiest energies have been expended in self-defense. Content if she could protect herself from the assaults of her enemies, and make her own bulwarks strong, she has seldom aspired to the more glorious enterprise of gaining fresh accessions to her kingdom, and traveling in the greatness of her strength, to become mighty to save. Hence those imperishable memorials of talent and labor, which have come down to us from past ages of the church, are almost exclusively mere *defenses* of christianity—able indeed—but not partaking of the nature of direct attacks upon the systems of her adversaries. What is true of such productions, is eminently true of the practice of christians. The church, since apostolic times, has never made the experiment of a combined *attack*, a systematic *invasion* into the kingdom of darkness. She appears to have been waiting for some sudden passion to seize the nations, like that which inspired christendom at the time of the crusades. On such a principle of tactics, to compute the ages which must elapse before the world will be evangelized, transcends our limited capacity. The Hindoo chronology which assigns to its fabulous dynasties, millions upon millions of ages, would form but an inconsiderable item in such a calculation. When a nobler principle shall be adopted—when christian governments shall have learned the first lesson of their duty to a perishing world—and the church shall go forth to the field with the same enterprise and ardor she has shewn on minor objects :—exhibiting the same wise adaptation of means to the end—the world is evangelized. When she has sent forth into the Holy Land, as many devoted missionaries, under inviolable vows, as she has superstitious palmers—when some Elliot, with the spirit of an apostle, shall pass, like Peter

the Hermit, through the courts of christian Europe, and summon their resources to the help of the Lord against the mighty :—when some soldier of the cross, with the untiring zeal of the “Lion-hearted” Richard—and with a soul burning with love to Christ, shall lead forth the *armies* of the living God, with banners consecrated with the unction of the Eternal Spirit, on a nobler crusade against the superstitions of Islamism ; then if we fail will be the time to sit down in ashes, and wonder at the limited spread of the gospel. Converting the world, by sending out here and there a poor, broken-hearted, sighing missionary, is like leveling the everlasting hills, by removing a stone once in a century. We have never imagined, even when our ‘enthusiasm’ was at its highest—that the spiritual wickedness in high places would cease of itself, and the world be converted in the absence of all adequate means. The whole matter is thrown into one syllogism, with admirable conciseness and irrefutable logic, by the “philosophic apostle.” “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard—and how shall they hear without a preacher—and how shall they preach, except they be *sent*?”

Again : Past efforts for evangelizing the world, have not only been exceedingly sparse and inadequate, but from *want of sufficient system have been, to a great extent, misdirected and wasted*. A vigorous writer of our day, has drawn an admirable distinction between the “charity of instinct,” and the “charity of principle”—the one holding forth a single cup to the passing traveler—the other digging a well in the desert, which once opened, will flow forever. Without dwelling upon this distinction, it is obvious, that the church for too long a period, acted at random on this subject. Whatever efforts were made, were made without a system, and without a plan. Elliot and Brainerd were noble hearted missionaries, but they were alone. When they died, none followed up their exertions. Compare the movements of the church, now, as she uses foresight and system and organization, with all preceding efforts. It is an immense augmentation of power which we have gained by reducing all our efforts to a uniform and consistent plan, by making every impulse however feeble, to bear upon one and the same purpose ! Means for converting the world are not wanting. Society abounds in resources for its own speedy and universal amelioration ; the public mind now seems to be heaving like the bosom of the deep ; and all that is necessary in order to accomplish the grandest designs of benevolence, is that the high-souled impulse should be guided by deliberate foresight, and by calm and considerate principle.

Were we called upon to specify causes now operating to create

indifference on the subject of missions, we should mention for one, *the past conduct of the church on the same subject*. The famous doctrine of "probability," as held by the Jesuits, consisted in this: "That an opinion or precept may be followed with a good conscience, when it is inculcated by four, or three, or two, nay even by one Doctor of considerable reputation, even though it be contrary to the judgment of him who follows, and even of him who recommends it." While men would blush to justify their conduct on the subject of missions by an open avowal of such a principle, a careful inspection of their motives might convince them, that much of their own indifference is to be ascribed to the example of the wise and good of past ages. Men eminent for learning, virtue, and as we believe, vital godliness, with one consent, slumbered over their duty to a perishing world. Who has forgotten it? No new revelation has been made to us, and many have the unconscious feeling—"Are not we more likely to err in reading our obligations, than those godly men, whose examples we imitate, and whose sainted memories we revere? We are willing to consider ourselves as extravagant and enthusiastic interpreters of our duty, but how can we censure such men on so serious a charge as that of disobeying the express commands of their Lord and Master—we cannot bear the thought that the church of Christ has incurred the tremendous curse of having done nothing, century after century for a world lying in wickedness."

Another cause of our limited efforts in behalf of the heathen, is a *prevailing skepticism as to their final condition*. When such men as Henry Brougham defend the position, that man is not responsible for his belief, it is not strange that bishops in the house of Lords should oppose the promulgation of christianity in India, or that a petition with one hundred thousand signatures should have been presented to parliament, to prevent any interference with the "innocent superstitions" of the oriental princes. The latitudinarian views which have obtained more or less throughout all christendom, tend directly to subvert a missionary spirit, by assuming the principle that one religion is as good and safe as another. The "beautiful mythology of paganism," as Gibbon so impudently denominates it, is regarded by many with the same complacency as a more spiritual creed. The open avowal and constant practice of a large body of professed christians in the midst of us, who declare their belief in the salvability of the heathen, is a good illustration of our position. This belief they have construed into their acquittal from the missionary enterprise. And we have never been so visionary as to expect that they would incur vast expenses, and live in the spirit of self-denial and martyrdom, in order to save their fellow men from an *imaginary* destruction. We wonder not that the

chief concern of such men with missions, is to smile at those who avow another conviction, while they mock them for their inconsistency. It becomes now a serious inquiry, what is the belief of evangelical christians upon this momentous subject. They profess to believe that nothing which defileth or worketh abomination, can enter the kingdom of heaven; and overwhelming as is the thought, that dying without holiness, the heathen must lie down under the wrath of God. But how extensively is this doctrine in fact received? How deeply is it felt by those who deduce it from scripture? To say the least, are not multitudes *skeptical* about its truth? Is it written on the fleshly tables of the heart as a conviction never to be effaced? Is it "held fast" with the tenacity of an abiding truth? Does this world appear to us as it did to Paul, like an immense wreck, when he uttered that appalling sentence—"if indeed I might save some!" At distant intervals, that one expression moves us like the trump of the archangel, to intense efforts and agonizing prayer in behalf of millions "ready to perish." But the enemies of the gospel raise the shout of denunciation against so hard a saying; till uneasiness and doubts arise in our own minds as to the method of reconciling this overwhelming truth with the benevolence of God; skepticism succeeds to conviction—the mind is all quiet again—till, perhaps, the season of monthly prayer, induces us again to summon together our reasons for so solemn a belief, and to wake up our feelings to a new interest in behalf of the helpless and hopeless. We need not tell men who have studied the human mind, that *skepticism* on any subject is the surest obstacle to exertion. It is worse than downright opposition. Men cannot *act*, when their minds are tossed about by every wind of doctrine. A firm belief concerning the future condition of the unevangelized, is the fundamental principle on which rests all efforts to send them the light and the truth of christianity. You may groupe in one appalling picture, all the miseries of superstition, ignorance and heathenism, as they affect the present life, or dwell with burning eloquence upon the final glories of the church—and thence may appeal to every generous principle in the heart of man to persuade him to extend the dominion of knowledge and true righteousness, yet the shadow of a doubt as to the future condition of sinful pagans, will outweigh any accumulation of motives of a less powerful tendency. But doubt on this subject is unnecessary. The apostles of Jesus Christ had no doubt as to the destiny of their fellow men, when with incredible zeal they flew from country to country to warn them of the wrath of God. By their conduct they commended the truth to every man's conscience in the sight of God. They acted as though they believed. "I believe, therefore, do I speak," is the invariable reply of the fervent-hearted Paul. Would

we act like them, we must possess the same consistency of opinion. If we do not wish to float through a religious life at the mind's pleasure, let us be steadfast and immoveable in some principle on this as every other point of duty—a principle which will make us uniformly either the friends or enemies of missions—which we are able to defend, and which we are not afraid to preach.

Another very serious impediment to a spirit of missionary enterprise, is *erroneous ideas of the sovereignty of God, creating a species of religious fatalism*. This has been stated in the following definite shape. "If that Being whose power is Almighty, has willed to permit on earth the protracted existence against him of this enormous evil, why am I called upon to vex and exhaust myself in a petty hostility against it?" Now this, most evidently, supposes our rule of action to be drawn from that which is beyond our comprehension, rather than from the plain, intelligible and explicit commands of God;—which we hold to be an absolute absurdity. We know of no better reply to all those who justify their sluggishness by a sanctimonious reference to the decrees of Omnipotence, who verily seem afraid of fulfilling the scriptures before the time—than that which is said to have been made by Robert Hall, amid the melancholy, yet often brilliant wanderings of a diseased mind, "we extend to you our cordial commiseration, in that you were *predestinated* to be sluggards in the kingdom of God, for you have made your calling and election sure."

How far our most exalted adorations of Almighty Power, are tinctured with the same fatalism, we cannot decide. But it would not be strange, if He who reads the heart should often detect a spirit of the most abject indolence, and deep rooted aversion to active duty, mingling with our humblest confessions of personal weakness and inefficiency, and loftiest ascriptions of praise to that Being who is "able to tread the wine press alone."

The *figurative language* employed by the sacred writers, may have affected the minds of many, not excepting those who are accustomed to discriminate, in the manner now described. We pray in the language of the bible that the "sun of righteousness" may arise upon the benighted nations, till imagination deceives us with the illusion that the darkness and depravity of the human soul is to be dissipated by some supernatural illumination, and in a manner as independent of human aid, as that by which the darkness of night is dispersed by the light of day. We pray that the "windows of heaven" may be opened, and an abundant blessing poured out, charmed with the beauty of an image which represents Omnipotence as raining righteousness down from heaven like showers that water the earth. We read of the "arm of the oppressor being broken," and the "prison doors" which are to be thrown open, and

we wait for some almighty power to palsey the one, and some miraculous agency like that which liberated the Apostles, to accomplish the other. It is our daily prayer that the knowledge of God and the gospel of his Son may speedily be communicated to the whole human family, and while the petition is yet warm upon our lips, imagination pictures some white-robed seraph, flying through heaven, bearing the everlasting gospel; as if this inspiring representation of the prophet were to be construed into an acquittal of all human instrumentality. Thus it has come to pass that we have lost sight of the little means and processes by which the purposes of God are to be accomplished amid the splendors of the prophetic vision. Thus we dwell more on the ultimate results we expect—the glory of the church, than upon the “foolishness of means” by which they are to be secured. We pray more that God would send out his light and truth, than that he would send us to proclaim that truth with our own living voices. We pray more that the gospel may be circulated through all tribes and languages of men, than that we may be employed in the work of translating, printing, and despatching them with our own hands.

The *prosperity of the church* is a prevalent cause of indifference on the subject of missions. The church never was impeded by persecution, and self-denial; it invariably is by self-indulgence and prosperity. The peace, security and enjoyment of its members in times of perfect quiet, is like that of soldiers reposing in their camp, or mariners in harbor. The spirit of enterprise is gone. Inactivity, self-gratulation, moral and intellectual dissipation succeed. So indisputable is the tendency of persecution and trials to purify, strengthen, and extend the church, that were it not for compassion and alarm for its enemies, it would be our daily prayer that such would rise up, many and strong to impugn her faith, and oppose her progress. This would not only, as Luther quaintly expresses it, “keep the word of God from growing rusty,” but would awake the church to new activity, and call it to become separated from the world. The church is never so limited in numbers and power, as when it approximates so near the world—as apparently to embrace the whole. She becomes mighty to save whenever the line is drawn plainly and impassably. Where this is done by persecution and wrath, the church is aided by means of its friendly violence, as is the oak by the storm. None will attach themselves to her in troublous times, but such as have the kingdom of God within them—men “honest in the sacred cause.” Should the days which try men’s souls—those days of old, when the wrath of man rolled in like a storm upon the church, this very hour break in upon her peace, such mighty transformations in her condition would be effected as speedily to preclude all sorrow because of her narrow and circumscribed

bounds. Instead of those who wait upon her in these days of "soft and silken professorship," a host would encamp about her of noble and valiant souls, such as bore her triumphant through seas of fire and blood in the days of martyrdom. The courtly bishop should bid an eternal farewell to his palaces of ease and splendor, and staff in hand, should go out into his ministry of love, as described by Milton; "undiocessed, unlorded, unreverenced, with nothing for his earthly portion but brotherly equality, matchless temperance, frequent fasting, incessant prayer and preaching, continual watchings and labors in his ministry." Many a titled dignitary should descend from his sinecure, and show by his honest efforts, that he is more ambitious to promote the glory of his Master, than to secure the splendors of office. The riches of the church should, without reserve, once more be laid at the feet of Christ, that in self-denial and poverty, the disciples may enjoy the glorious privilege of feeling like their master, the servants like their lord. The pomp of ceremonial worship should be consigned over to those whose religion consists in it; while such men only should minister at the altar, as would bring back that period, when it was said that the church had "wooden chalices and golden priests, instead of golden chalices and wooden priests;"—men who would consider no earthly distinction in comparison with the honor of turning sinners from the error of their ways; and who, with souls burning to do something for Christ, would labor in season and out of season, esteeming it no reproach to follow in the footsteps of the apostles, and endeavor to convert souls at "uncanonical hours;"—men more covetous of the "obsolete honors of christianity," strifes, persecution and martyrdom, than the splendors of a courtly establishment; men, "guiltless of the abominations of the surplice," and who as Cotton Mather expresses it, would be willing "like silk-worms to consume themselves to weave garments of righteousness for others." Under the guidance of such men, who seek not their own but the things which are Jesus Christ's—men zealous for doing their duty on earth, ambitious only of being numbered in heaven with those who have come out of great tribulation and are clothed in white, the church will go forth conquering and to conquer, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

A sure obstacle to missionary enterprise, is a *low standard of piety at heart*. This is an obstacle paramount to every other, for life and energy will not circulate through the extremities, if the heart is destitute of vigor. In those years when the Spirit of God is poured out most abundantly upon our churches, missionary feeling and contributions have risen in a steady and constant gradation; and in the year 1829—a season remarkable for the withdrawal of the Spirit, a night when no dews distilled from

heaven, when the watchman upon the walls were left to exchange the sad and disheartening cry, "Watchman, what of the night?" there was as remarkable a deficit in the treasury of the Lord. This is the most interesting aspect in which we can look upon our revivals of religion—they will be felt in the uttermost parts of the earth, as surely as the pulsation of the heart extends through all the limbs. There is no such thing as the church's possessing a distinct and divided interest from any of our race, however remote. No sooner does that which is of permanent and essential interest to us, rise in importance in our estimation, and christian motive rise to a higher pitch—than the islander of the distant ocean comes in for his share of our prayers and labors, for he is but a part and a property of a christian's soul. Christianity is essentially missionary in its character. Christians are citizens of the world. Devoted to the amelioration of the whole race, they should adopt as their motto, the noble sentiment of Terence, though in a nobler sense than his,—“I am a man, and whatever concerns man interests me.”—There is but one field—the *world*. There are but two sides in the universe,—that of God, and satan. The cry is now heard under the whole heaven—Who is on the Lord's side? and whoever he may be, wherever he may dwell, whatever may be his language or complexion, that obeys the call, and passes over to His allegiance, he subtracts one from that rebellious army, which will ere long be left in a fearful minority, and adds one to that “sacramental host of God's elect,” which will as speedily triumph. In this great controversy, there is one peculiarity of transcendent encouragement to the friends of God, and a sure presage of approaching defeat to his enemies. From the nature of the case, the only change of parties which can ever occur, is from the wrong to the right side. By nature, all men are on the wrong side. Of course, whatever change takes place, must be from this first universal condition, over to the cause of God. But God has promised to keep all who espouse his cause; not one of them can fail. There can be no such thing as defection and desertion on the part of God's friends. So that whenever an individual in any part of the world, deserts the cause of sin and satan, and chooses the service of his Maker, there is no one to fill his place. He leaves a vacancy, which never will be supplied. No wonder that these frequent desertions strike the enemies of the living God, with consternation and disaster. In this day of glorious revivals, they are so numerous, that the mind instinctively adopts the glowing and beautiful language of the prophet—“Who are these that fly as a cloud and as doves to their windows?” These revivals are the means which will soon decide the relative strength of the friends and foes of the Redeemer—they

will spread from time to time, merging into each other, and finally loosing all distinction of time and place, in that long predicted revival of the millennium, for they will set

“ ——— as sets the morning star, which goes
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides
Obscured among the tempests of the sky
But melts away into the light of heaven.”

We enter now upon a brief consideration of another obstacle to activity and enterprise in evangelizing the world,—it is a theme which we hope to discuss at large at some future period—the neglect or perversion of the prophecies of scripture concerning the conversion of the world.

When properly understood, these predictions are the chief incentive to every benevolent enterprise. A just and popular arrangement of them, founded on a safe principle of interpretation like that of Hengstenburg, would not only be a great desideratum with every scholar, but would constitute the most inspiring plea ever penned in behalf of missions. To accommodate to this subject, the elegant language of Dugald Stewart upon a kindred theme; “One thing is certain, that the greatest of all obstacles to the improvement of the world, is that prevailing belief of its improbability which damps the exertions of so many individuals, and that in proportion as the contrary opinion becomes general, it realizes the event which it leads us to anticipate. Surely, if any thing can have a tendency to call forth in the public service the exertions of individuals, it must be an idea of the magnitude of that work in which they are conspiring, and a belief of the permanency of those benefits which they confer on mankind, by any attempt to inform and enlighten them. As in ancient Rome, therefore, it was regarded as the mark of a good citizen never to despair of the fortunes of the republic, so the good citizen of the world, whatever may be the aspect of the times in which he lives, with the prophecies of scripture in his hand, will never despair of the fortunes of the human race, but will act upon the conviction that prejudice, slavery, and corruption must gradually give way to truth, liberty, and virtue; and that in the moral world, as well as in the natural, the further our observations extend, the more we shall perceive of order and of benevolent designs in the universe.”

Notwithstanding the immense importance of scriptural prophecies, no portion of scripture has been so grossly perverted from its proper uses and tendency. Neither is this a matter of necessity, arising from the nature of those prophecies, but of guilt on the part of those who have neglected or abused them. On this subject it becomes us to adopt the language of confession, and say with

Daniel, "we have sinned, and done wickedly, and have not hearkened unto the voice of the prophets."—One glance at the manner in which these prophecies have been, and still are regarded by the majority of the church, will demonstrate that our assertions are not groundless, and give full proof that missionary efforts will be suspended, by any perversion of this most important and inspiring portion of the bible. To one and by far the larger portion of christians, these prophecies are useless, from their being neglected. They are not read at all, because the mystery which envelopes them is construed into a rebuke of all human investigation. Regarding them as emphatically the "deep things of God," which pass all understanding, they shelter themselves from the charge of remissness, under the plea of human ignorance and short-sightedness. To all such, this part of the bible is a dead letter. These predictions are to them, as unmeaning and incoherent as the leaves which the sybil scattered to the wind. They never presume to knock at those close and mysterious recesses, which they confidently believe never were designed for human inspection. If, perchance, their minds should once be kindled into a momentary glow, by those burning images which the Holy Ghost has employed to describe the future glory of the church, they never imagine any possible connection between them and man's humble instrumentality; and thus as they gaze in wonder and inactivity, these prophecies, designed by heaven like lights in the midst of darkness, to guide the church to its duty, pass off to the other side of the firmament, and form themselves into a distant and brilliant cloud-scenery, as though their surpassing beauty, and solemn grandeur were given merely for man's admiration. "Why stand ye gazing thus up into heaven and do not the things which God has commanded?" Recollecting now that *all* scripture is given for our instruction, and that the prophetic parts are pointed out as objects of our special attention and study—let us ask, to what salutary purpose, are these prophecies made subservient? How many have any thing but confused notions as to their relevancy and importance? Who has not noticed a wide disparity between the common-place duties of religion and the splendid predictions of millennial glory. How are these predictions to be fulfilled? By what agency? How rarely are these predictions made the source of stirring warning, and animating hope from the pulpit. Occasionally, a preacher undertakes to identify a passing event with some prediction of the prophetic system—and draws from their mysterious "chambers of imagery," materials to attract attention and embellish his discourse. If indeed ornament were the only object of the preacher, he would find his noblest materials in those visions

of prophecy in which the Holy Ghost employs and exhausts, so to speak, the whole force and splendor of inspiration. But the stupendous scenery of prophecy was intended for something more than dramatic effect. This therefore, is one way by which the prophecies of scripture are rendered so inefficient. They are not read and understood. They were designed to make men active and zealous in aiding on the progress of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. They who neglect and undervalue them lose the mighty impulse. No wonder that the "living wheels" of christian benevolence are stayed, when the spirit by which they are to go, is taken away.

To another class who have adopted an erroneous system of interpretation, these prophecies have been worse than useless, by being perverted into a fruitful source of all that is wild and visionary. The fundamental error of their system of exegesis is the presumption, that exact and discernable periods of time are allotted to each predicted event, and that it is their duty to unravel the mystery, by assigning each distinct prediction to its corresponding event in passing history. No national transaction has been overlooked : each passing event has been interwoven as a part of this most solemn and stupendous drama. The rapid succession of great national events, in the age in which we live, has added plausibility to these Protean interpretations. Not a battle has been fought, not a congress of crowned heads convened, not a revolution in national politics, but the seals of prophecy have been broken, and the voice of solemn invitation has been heard, "Come and See."—The French revolution, with its scenes of unparalleled atrocity—the rise, and gathering power, and fate of Napoleon, all brought to naught the predictions of preceding millenarians ; and yet the battle of Navarino was no sooner decided, than the sons of the prophets had gone up upon the mountains, to foretell the consequences of the little cloud then gathering in the East. Scriptural prophecies have been marshaled without number as applicable to still more insignificant events, till it has come to pass, that the trump of solemn prophecy, which any angel in heaven would tremble to sound, has been converted by these enthusiasts into a mere newsman's horn. Language cannot be found sufficiently strong, with which to reprobate so gross a perversion of scripture, and especially of that book which is distinguished from every other in the oracles of God, by a fearful woe denounced against such as should presume to alter it in the minutest tittle, and to the perusal of which, as if to distinguish it as an object of special attention and study, is attached an express benediction—"blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words

of this prophecy."—It is by no means strange, that amid such discordant interpretations, the most animating representations of the final glory of the church, should have come to be regarded as proverbial expressions, for all that is wild and chimerical: and that with no small class, the millennium is synonymous with every thing that is visionary; since these mistaken men have so often "put christianity in pawn to infidelity, and have not redeemed her at the appointed time." No wonder that the church does not feel the influence of these predictions, urging her onward in her brightening course of duty, and that she sits down in quiet indifference, waiting for the crisis of the nations to be introduced, and vainly expecting that the succeeding events over which she has no control, are predestined to waft her, wave after wave, towards her final glory.

"Sweet is the harp of prophecy—too sweet
Not to be wronged by a mere mortal touch.
Nor can the wonders it records be sung
To meaner music, and not suffer loss."

Though we hope to resume this topic on a future occasion, we shall now state concisely, what we regard as the great error of this system of interpretation. It consists in the assumption *that we can always calculate time as applicable to events predicted.* In a few instances, to answer particular purposes, disclosures as to time are made. In others, the peculiar form of expression employed, precludes all possibility of understanding it, until the event shall have come to pass. Thus Daniel confesses that he could not comprehend the meaning of the mystical expression from the mouth of the angel, "a time, times, and a half." How many have striven to make themselves wiser on this point than the prophet himself! As a general thing, time probably did not enter into the minds of the prophets themselves as connected with events; and of course, it is in vain for uninspired men to calculate the times and seasons which are hid from all but that Being with whom a thousand years are but as one day, and one day as a thousand years. This opinion is corroborated by the very nature of the prophetic vision. It was in fact a *vision*. Things future seemed to be present; just as they were then transpiring before the eye of the prophet. This accounts for the otherwise mysterious connection which may be noticed in the prophetic system, between an event which actually occurred in the time of the prophets, and other events then existing in the distance of futurity. They all formed but one vision—one picture to the eye of the beholder. The mind of the prophet, unconscious of intervening space, glanced from one to another still more remote, while all are so combined as to present but

one uniform scene to his supernatural vision. This may be illustrated by the prospect of an extended landscape. From the spot on which we stand, over the wide and ascending landscape to the distant mountain that bounds our vision, we have but one picture that strikes the eye. Hill rises above hill, woodland beyond woodland, mountain above mountain, but the eye of the distant spectator cannot measure the space which intervenes between these objects. Those hills are separated by ravines—those mountains by sweeping vallies, but to the distant eye they present one uniform prospect. They seem to be in contact with each other. Time in the prophetic vision, may be compared to space intervening between the different points of such a landscape. The prophet's eye glanced from one event to another as they rose on his extatic vision, till it rested on the distant mountain-tops of futurity, while he was as unable as we to measure the exact time which should elapse between each event. The order of *succession* might be apparent, but nothing more.

We hope we have not wearied our readers by detaining them for a moment, upon what they perhaps may be inclined to regard as mere speculation. To us however it seems of the highest importance, that the public mind should be rightly directed on this subject. To feel the proper influence of scriptural prophecy in its best tendency, it is not necessary that we be able to compute the exact number of years which must elapse before the millennium will dawn upon us. It is enough for us to know that such a time is yet to come, and that it is to be introduced by human agency combining with the divine. There is an end to be gained as glorious as heaven—*how* is it to be attained? by a process of well arranged and efficient means? or is it to rise upon the world, like a sun, without a dawn? There is an object to be accomplished—by men? or by angels? Such are the inquiries which spontaneously suggest themselves to the mind of one who comprehends the real nature and object of the book of prophecy. Ask such a man, when will the long predicted period of future glory arrive, his prompt and natural reply is, *just when christians shall do their duty*. He feels that those splendid predictions increase, not annihilate human responsibility, that they are designed to promote a healthier action, and afford encouragement and hope to the diligent, rather than to foster indolence and gratify a useless curiosity. What has such a man to do with times and seasons? Willingly he allows such questions to repose in the bosom of God, while that solemn adjunct to the voice of prophecy "*behold I come quickly*," vibrates in his ear as the warning voice of preparation, while with a warm heart and a ready hand, he proceeds on his course of active duty, as though the whole millennium depended on his individual exertions. No shadowy an-

anticipations cheer his soul : no doubts of success dishearten him amid the iron labor. The "sure word of prophecy" is as an anchor to his soul. Amid the dark, conflicting and agitated elements of human society, he believes that the Spirit of God is again moving upon the face of the waters, and out of these chaotic materials, is forming a new creation of light, and peace and righteousness. What has such a man to fear from the inveteracy of error, from the appalling power of ignorance—from the opposition of satan? He knows, while the page of prophecy is open before him,—and he acts upon the conviction,—that error will be done away, ignorance will be enlightened, and all enemies will be put under the feet of Him whose right it is to reign, and who will hold dominion from sea to sea. What though he hear of wars and rumors of wars, and all the elements of human society seem in mighty agitation, his heart is not disquieted within him, for all this is but a sure prelude of that period, when the king of nations shall "overturn and overturn," and thus prepare the way for the wider extension and final triumphs of the kingdom of peace.—What though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, his steadfast soul is not afraid ; possessed of an unshaken persuasion of the promises of God, respecting the triumph and enlargement of his kingdom, *he is strong in faith*. In the eloquent language of Robert Hall, "he feels it to be impossible that the mind should be too much impressed with the beauty, glory and grandeur of the kingdom of Christ, as it is unfolded in the oracles of the Old and New Testaments ; nor with the certainty of the final accomplishment of those oracles, founded on the faithfulness and omnipotence of their author. To these parts of scripture his attention is ever drawn, in which the Holy Ghost employs the full force and splendor of inspiration, in depicting the future reign of the Messiah, together with that astonishing spectacle of dignity, purity and peace which his church will exhibit, when having the glory of God, her bounds shall be commensurate with those of the habitable globe ; when every object on which the eye shall rest, will remind the spectator of the commencement of a new age, in which the tabernacle of God is with men, and he dwells among them. His spirit becomes imbued with that sweet and tender awe which such anticipations infallibly produce, whence will spring a generous contempt of the world, and an ardor bordering on impatience, to be employed, though in the humblest sphere, as the instrument of accelerating such a period. For compared to this destiny in reserve for the children of men, compared to this glory, invisible at present, and hid behind the clouds which envelope this dark and troubled scene, the bright-

est day that has hitherto shone upon the world is midnight, and the highest splendors that have invested it, the shadow of death."

Such is the proper influence of scriptural prophecies. An influence how different from the narrow prejudices, and limited views of the man who has perverted them from their true purpose ! There is no necessity that we should know the times and the seasons ; there is no part of prophecy which may not be made highly profitable, and more so, while the time of its fulfillment is uncertain. For instance, take the last chapter of the Apocalypse. You find in the introduction of it a description of that place, where the just shall reign forever, which is adorned by all that grace has gathered and beautified from the ruins of the world. While your heart throbs in anticipation of coming glory, and seems careless for the trifles of this passing world, and rises, as on the wings of eagles, in adoration of that Being whose face you are to see, and in whose presence you are to dwell, we need not recall your heavenly thoughts, and check your rising joys, and withhold your strains of adoration to determine *where* that abode shall be. As we, and you read that the time is at hand, that He comes quickly, who is to bring a reward for every man according to his deeds, while the awed spirit returns upon itself, to ask if it is ready, we need not stay to inquire *when, at what exact period* that coming shall be. He that testifieth of these things saith, "*surely I come quickly*"—and if our hearts breathe the prompt *Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus*, they will be too full of these desires, and the gladness of these tidings, to enter into any controversy as to the times and seasons.

There is one aspect however, in which we should be acquainted with the times of recorded prophecy. We should study the great plan of divine operations in the unfolding events of providence. It is the glory of christian faith to outstrip the providence of God : let it not be said to our shame, that we lag behind it. We live in a day, when signs of promise are breaking out on the right hand and on the left. Though a mighty result is yet to be produced, under which we might well despair and faint, were it not for the page of the prophet's vision, yet the cause of God is even now prevailing, and will speedily triumph. Those who wish may draw back,—but they draw back to perdition. The enemies and timorous friends of the church, will ere long be left in a fearful minority. The day-star has already risen. The light and the truth are breaking out above, beneath, and around ; angels rejoice in heaven over repenting sinners : a multitude which no man can number are already seen flying through heaven like clouds, and as doves to their windows. God is working a work which men will not believe for wonder,

though it be told them. Though friends may falter and draw back,—though foes may rally in their last mighty opposition—though the waves of error may roll and dash against the church, like an angry flood—yet Jehovah-Jesus is in the midst of his people—he hath come into his temple with a visible manifestation of his glory, and all the people shall say with shoutings and thanksgiving—“Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, we will rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”

The fiery wheels of God's providence neither stay nor roll backward, but are hastening on the accomplishment of His own purposes of mercy. The surface of human society, as if expectant of its last brightest change is heaving like the bosom of the deep—the desert is beginning to blossom and the darkness to disperse, and the time is at hand when the whole earth shall have become the kingdom of the Redeemer. Though heaven and earth pass away, not one jot of God's word shall fail. Why then stand lingering which to choose, the cause of God, which will prevail, or that cause which will as surely be covered with merited and everlasting disgrace? Let us glory in the privilege of making the cause of God our own. Let us thank God for the privilege of being co-workers for him in the renovation of the world.

ART. IV.—NATURAL HISTORY OF ENTHUSIASM AND SATURDAY EVENING.

Natural History of Enthusiasm. Boston: published by Crocker & Brewster. 1830.

Saturday Evening. By the author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*. From the London edition. Published by Crocker and Brewster: Boston. 1832.

THE deep impression produced both in England and in this country by these two works, particularly by the former, is undoubtedly known to most of our readers. The latter indeed is quite recently from the press; yet it has already attracted much notice on both sides of the water. The powerful hold, which the *Natural History of Enthusiasm* obtained on the feelings of the religious public, was favorable of course to the immediate and eager reception of the recent work; which, though it may not be equal to its predecessor in every respect, is yet worthy of the writer, and of the reputation which he has acquired. It is not indeed too much to say, that few books of the kind have of late years appeared, which have been so interesting to serious, thinking readers in general, as the books in question—and the same may be said of one or two other productions by the same hand. Of such an effect every one who looks into the volumes, will be able at

once to understand the cause. Without enlarging here upon the few criticisms which we intend to offer in the present article, we would say that they are the works of a man of genius—of profound and original thinking, on subjects most deserving of thought—that the representations which they contain appear to come from the heart, while they certainly speak to the heart, and in a masterly manner develop its secret workings.

The appearance of these volumes has suggested the thought to our minds, that two or three eras in religious writing may be traced, within the period of our own recollection. The first was about thirty-five years since, when Mr. Wilberforce published his well-timed and eloquent *Practical View of Christianity*, in which he attempted to awaken the attention of the christian world to its deficiencies and its duties, and to a more accurate discrimination of the real nature of religion. The power of this work was felt wherever the English language was known. Some years after, Mr. John Foster, and a little subsequent to him, Dr. Chalmers, both of them by the striking peculiarity and influence of their respective writings, furnish another starting point. The former in his celebrated *Essays*, striking out in some sense, a new and unexplored course of religious thought, and developing certain relations of the gospel but imperfectly considered before, added not a little to the moral and intellectual treasures of the world. The latter, particularly in his *Astronomical and his Commercial Discourses*, though displaying a more professional cast, gave an increased impulse to the investigation of what may be called the economy of *social, religious life*. Contemporaneously with these writers, Fuller, Scott, Hall, Mrs. H. Moore, and the contributors to the *Christian Observer*, and the *Eclectic Review*, with a diversity of style and variety of power, though without such peculiarities of manner and circumstance as to claim for the productions of any of them a distinct epoch, contributed to the mass of religious reading and impression. Among these, Hall, by the grandeur of his intellect, and the classic beauty of his style, stood conspicuous, and will descend to posterity as one of the noblest specimens of our race. We would not however, omit to mention the distinguished religious writers of this country, such as Mason, Dwight, and Evarts, who, mostly within the period embraced in our remarks, exerted by their pens, a wide and salutary influence. In connection with these distinguished men, there has arisen a class of writers who, acquainting themselves with the rules of scriptural interpretation, beyond the degree attained by their predecessors, and ascending to original sources of theological knowledge, have added a most useful and instructive portion to the reading and studies of the religious public, and are destined

to add much more. In the works of the author before us, we fancy to ourselves the occurrence of a third era; since combining the improvements that have been made of late in theological investigation, with a rich vein of imagination, and a bold and racy style, he seems to possess, in a very uncommon degree, the power of religious analysis,—of dissecting with perfect clearness, the different states and feelings of our moral nature; and of handling in an attractive and discriminating manner the abstruser parts of religious speculation.

Curiosity has been strongly excited in Great Britain, respecting the name of this writer, as he has hitherto chosen to appear anonymously in print. For a time the *Natural History of Enthusiasm* was attributed to Mr. Douglas; but the style bears no resemblance to the style of that author. Conjecture has more recently fixed upon Mr. Isaac Taylor, brother and biographer of Miss Jane Taylor, and his name has of late been very confidently given to the public in our newspapers, as author of these works. One of the publishers of this work however, has been assured by a London correspondent, in answer to an inquiry on the subject, that this report which was once current in England, is not now believed to be correct. The author, at all events, has not yet chosen to disclose his name—apparently with the design of enhancing the effect of his writings, by the air of mystery which naturally belongs to productions of such ability, when unclaimed.

In addition to the works mentioned at the head of this article, the author has given two others at least to the public—one entitled “A Model of Christian Missions,” and the other an “Essay on the Application of Abstract Reasoning to the Christian Doctrines.” The former was an early work in which his object was twofold—first to show the impropriety and inefficiency of the present plan of conducting missions to the heathen, by the separate denominations under their distinctive banners—and next to point out a new plan, the principle of which should be a union of missionary exertions, under the direction of some one of the existing denominations. On this plan he would bring into action one of the great secrets of success in all enterprises—the *division of labor*. For the sake of exemplifying his principle, he proposes that the entire resources of christian beneficence should be turned into the channel of seven societies, to each of which he assigns as the quota of its spiritual care and achievement, a distinct portion of the unevangelized world. The arguments which he brings forward, in favor of his new model are certainly well chosen; and such is the zeal, not to say the force and sometimes the show of right with which they are urged, that the whole structure of christian missions as at present reared,

might well nigh be considered as shaken to the ground, were there not on the face of his own plan something too chimerical, and in its execution that which too nearly approaches impossibility, for prudent men to think of adopting it. These features in his proposal he endeavors indeed to smooth over, and ventures to assert the utter hopelessness of effecting the conversion of the world, as the work is now carried on, or in any other way than that of the general coalescence of christians. It would be easy, however, to answer his objections; and much as we might desire the union of christians in this work, and much as we have reason to be mortified by their baneful collisions, it might be enough to say, that the providence of God seems as yet to open no way, in which the work can be done differently from that, in which it has been commenced. He is doubtless correct in supposing, that it would be impossible to contrive a new model of worship, and a new platform of church government, by means of deputies from the several communities, without awakening "the formidable ghosts of obsolete polemics." But why he should imagine that the different parties, having each its strong predilections for its own modes, would be more satisfied with having the direction of the great work of missions, assigned to one existing model—the Establishment, it is not so easy to tell. The same difficulty would exist in all, except in the favored denomination, because each would be called upon to merge its own distinctive peculiarity, in the faith and the forms of the established church. This circumstance would rather show, that his plan is not feasible, and would

"Seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success."

It is here, as in some other portions of his writings that we perceive the author is much better fitted to find fault and pull down, than to build up. There is in him much that is adventurous and adapted to set men a thinking, but he seems far from possessing a mind which can ever establish systems of its own. The book embodies many striking observations and much truth; but the great principle which he recommends, however desirable it may be in itself, or would be in different circumstances of the church, is any thing rather than wise and felicitous in its details. The improbability of its adoption, at least in the present situation of things, if ever indeed, was soon made apparent in an answer which the book received from Mr. Orme, in a preface to Swan's Letters on Missions.

The Essay on the Application of Abstract Reasoning to the Christian Doctrines, we hardly know how to characterize. Simply to pronounce it able, would, perhaps, be saying too little in its

favor, and yet to admit that its conclusions are just, or that it promises to be of any *direct* use to theological science would be saying too much. It is *unique* in its character. While the author exhibits in many respects an admirable keenness, discrimination, and capacity to pursue a fleeting and tenuous idea in every shape and form till it borders on unreality, he writes at the same time with more sprightliness, vigor, elegance, and richness of illustrations—illustrations drawn from science, history, general literature, and common life, than we recollect ever to have met with on topics of this description. The result however, at which he arrives, viz. that the question respecting free-will is of no practical importance, may induce many to doubt whether he has not himself been bewildered by refined speculation. Discussions of this kind may be injudiciously conducted, but seriously to maintain that it is of no importance how we settle the question whether we are free agents or not—of no use to relieve the testimony of conscience on such a subject, from the load of false philosophy—is too gross an error to meet with much favor in a country like ours. Revivals of religion bring home the subject to christians here, in a manner totally unknown in England. The first objection of every impenitent sinner, under Calvinistic preaching, when pressed to the instantaneous performance of his duty, is, "*I cannot.*" This objection must be met in *some* way, or it is in vain to urge upon sinners the commands of the gospel. Nor will it avail to tell them, they are *bound* to repent—that to deny this duty, brings them into direct collision with their maker who enjoins it—that we must leave them to settle the controversy with him—that their consciences tell them, they are in the wrong. Their consciences do not tell them they are in the wrong, for not doing what they have *no power* to perform. Men may be silenced by authority, or driven by anguish of soul to drop the question, and go directly forward and "strive to enter in at the straight gate;" but it is impossible from the constitution of our nature for a man *really* to condemn himself for not turning to God, when he feels that he has not the requisite *power*. To attempt to do it, is like endeavoring to repent of Adam's sin. Revivals of religion have taught us, that we must meet this question directly in the face; and that instead of being removed from the practical concerns of life, it is one in comparison with which all other questions are of no moment. It is idle to say as the author does, that this plea is not admitted in any of the practical interests of life, because the subject belongs to a *different department*, that of abstract ethics; and that we ought on this ground to set it aside in religion. It is not true, that the plea is *any where* set aside on this ground; and the author's assumption that it is, furnishes a striking proof to our minds, that with all his ingenuity he has looked with but little

discrimination into this subject. When a court of justice (to take his own example) reject an argument in exculpation of a prisoner, derived from the science of craniology, they do it, not because this science belongs to a different department from that of law, but because they have no belief in craniology. Let them be once convinced that the fact alledged is true, and has a real bearing on the point at issue, and there is not a tribunal in christendom which would not receive it in evidence, to whatever department it may belong. Thus in point of fact, questions in anatomy, chemistry, mineralogy, and many other branches of science, are continually brought to bear on the decisions of courts of justice. When, therefore, the plea of "man's inability to act otherwise than he does act," is rejected both in judicial proceedings, and in the ordinary concerns of life, it is done solely on the ground, *that there is no truth whatever in the pretense.* The facts adduced by the author, instead of proving that men in their practical concerns, consider it of no importance *how* this question is decided, show that every human being has already decided it in one way. Mankind will not suffer the business of life to stand still for a moment, or a single worldly interest to be sacrificed, under such a pretense; nor can the individual be found of sufficient hardihood, to insult his fellow-men with such a plea for invading their rights. But men *do* thus insult their Maker; and "because sentence against" this "evil work is not executed" by God as speedily as it is by man, "their hearts are fully set in them to do" so. Having their duty, they lay open their minds with eagerness to every suggestion of false philosophy, which may serve to silence conscience and excuse delay. Taking it, then, as a mere philosophical question, is it of no importance to strip the sinner of this "refuge of lies," which has been the ruin of so many millions? For our own part, we do believe that the man who should fully accomplish the design of Edwards—who should finally and forever remove from the minds of men, all the doubts which they cherish on this subject, resulting from our acknowledged dependence for holiness on divine grace—who should exhibit the doctrines of decrees and free agency in such perfect consistency, that every mind could see it, in all its bearings, and thus leave each of these truths to take its full effect on the human heart, unobstructed by the other—would do more to promote the salvation of our race, than has been done by any uninspired man from the beginning of time. Why should such an attempt be considered hopeless?

To do justice however, to our author's deep-toned piety and love of scriptural truth we would observe, that he admits Edwards' work to have answered some good purposes, not however so directly as incidentally. While he laments that it has become al-

most the text-book of infidelity, he acknowledges it has not been useless in respect to the spirit it exhibits, and its exemption from the common offenses of polemical literature. He believes it to have checked the flippancy of the world, and that the recent return of episcopal divinity to a sounder state, is owing to its influence, in a greater degree than those who have yielded to that influence, are willing always to confess. He admits especially, that it has laughed to scorn the *philosophy* of Arminianism, and placed Calvinism as a general system on high vantage ground,—expressing his belief that in this system, and not even in evangelical Arminianism, is found the destined barrier against the inroads of neology and atheism.

But it is time to come to the books, on which we designed more particularly to remark. We took them up not so much for the purpose of giving a minute account of their contents, as of reviewing their author generally as a writer; and it is for this reason that we have dwelt, in a few paragraphs, on two other publications from the same pen. They all show the same original and highly gifted mind—the profound thinker—the evangelically devout christian. The *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, as above intimated, has produced a powerful impression on its readers, an impression, it cannot be doubted, favorable to true piety. It is one of those works which must be felt, whenever it comes in contact with intelligence and virtue. Its execution in general is marked by an intellectual and moral vigor, an extent and accuracy of observation, and a purity and elevation of taste which highly commend it to the enlightened, the refined, the serious, and the meditative. The reader, however, must not expect to be merely amused, gratified, or instructed. Much as he may think himself free from enthusiasm, he will be searched, and if he is indeed a child of God, he will probably be purified. He will find the writer's spirit mingling familiarly with his own, revealing the secret thoughts of his heart, and bringing forth to light the cherished errors, and "the dark idolatries" that may remain within. The nature of the subject led the author to be discriminative, and to apply to the reader's heart, indirectly indeed, but effectually, the tests of piety in his several discussions. Enthusiasm, with him, is no part of true religion; and though connected with it, and often viewed as an innocent infirmity, he treats it as a moral nuisance, deadly to the soul, inasmuch as it usurps the place which the gospel is meant to occupy. By considering enthusiasm as a term "not of measurement but of quality," he has attempted very correctly, we think, to dispel those perilous illusions of which so many are enamored, under the idea that their fervor, however unenlightened and erratic it may be,

must be acceptable to God. He is careful to insist, that where there is no error of imagination, and where realities are in view—eternal realities,—no feelings can be too intense—or to use his own description, “there is no enthusiasm, even though the soul may be on fire with the velocity of its movements in pursuit of its chosen object.” In his use of the epithet, we connect with enthusiasm an idea of folly, weakness, extravagance, and vice. He who is its victim, and whose piety, therefore, is fictitious, “has only a choice of immoralities, to be determined by his temperament and circumstances.” He may become a lazy contemplative, a sour visionary, or a furious zealot. With this view of enthusiasm, springing, as he acknowledges, from our physical constitution and cherished by the depravity of the heart, he proceeds to examine several principal points, in order to establish an intelligible distinction between what is genuine and what is spurious, in religious feeling. These points, following the order in which the author has presented them in several sections, relate to enthusiasm in devotion—in the conception of the doctrine of divine influence—in expositions of scripture leading to heresy—in prophetic interpretation—in the application of the doctrine of a particular providence—in the exercise of christian philanthropy. He concludes by giving a sketch of the enthusiasm of the ancient church, particularly in its monachism, and by offering to those who misuse the term enthusiasm, several hints on the probable extension of christianity.

Some of these topics are handled with singular felicity, and there are none which do not afford a rich fund of instruction and spiritual entertainment. We would notice as particularly excellent his remarks on *devotional enthusiasm*, and on enthusiastic abuses of the doctrine of a *particular providence*. A sentiment occasionally appears, the correctness of which we should hesitate to admit, and there are two or three faults which it is our intention soon to notice, as occurring in the works of the author throughout; but in general we know not where to find among our recent publications, thoughts more important, or more suited to the times, or better recommended by a rich and bold imagery than the volumes before us contain. As specimens, from the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, a few passages may be taken almost any where from the book.

The following original and striking thought is from the chapter on devotion.

Nor is it only the brightness of the Eternal throne that is shrouded from the view of those who are invited to draw near to him that “sitteth thereon;” for the immeasurable distance that separates man from his Maker is carefully veiled by the concealment of the intervening orders of rational beings. Though the fact of such superior existences is clearly affirmed, nothing more than the bare fact is

imparted; and we cannot misunderstand the reason and necessity of so much reserve; for without it those free and kindly movements of the heart in which genuine devotion consists, would be overborne by impressions of a kind that belong to the imagination. * * * * The idea of immense separation would be painfully enhanced, if distinct vision were obtained of the towering hierarchy of intelligences at the basement of which the human system is founded. Were it indeed permitted to man to gaze upward from step to step, and from range to range, of the vast edifice of rational existences, and could his eye attain its summit, and then perceive at an infinite height beyond that highest platform of created beings, the lowest steps of the Eternal throne—what liberty of heart would afterwards be left to him in drawing near to the Father of spirits? How, after such a revelation of the upper world, could the affectionate cheerfulness of earthly worship again take place?—Or, how, while contemplating the measured vastness of the interval between heaven and earth, could the dwellers thereon come familiarly, as before, to the Hearer of prayer, bringing with them the small requests of their petty interests of the present life? If introduction were had to the society of those beings whose wisdom has accumulated during ages which time forgets to number, and who have lived to see, once and again, the mystery of the providence of God complete its cycle, would not the impression of *created superiority* oppress the spirit, and obstruct its access to the Being whose excellencies are absolute and infinite? Or what would be the feelings of the infirm child of earth, if, when about to present his supplications, he found himself standing in the theatre of heaven, and saw, ranged in a circle wider than the skies, the congregation of immortals? These spectacles of greatness, if laid open to perception, would present such an interminable perspective of glory, and so set out the immeasurable distance between ourselves and the Supreme Being with a long gradation of splendors, that we should hence-forward feel as if thrust down to an extreme remoteness from the divine notice; and it would be hard or impossible to retain, with any comfortable conviction, the belief in the nearness of him who is revealed as “a very present help in every time of trouble.” But that our feeble spirits may not thus be overborne, or our faith and confidence baffled and perplexed, the Most High hides from our sight the ministries of his court, and, dismissing his train, visits with infinite condescension the lowly abodes of those who fear him, and dwells as a Father in the homes of earth. pp. 32, 34, 35.

A paragraph or two may be taken, from the author's account of the enthusiastic perversions of the doctrine of divine influence.

But a doctrine of divine influence like this, which is so full of promise and of comfort to the aspirant after true virtue, and which offers nothing to those who are eager for transitory excitements, and who look for visible displays of supernatural power, does not satisfy the religious enthusiast. Not content to be the recipient of an invigorating and purifying emanation, which, unseen and unperceived, elevates the debased affections and fixes them on the Supreme Excellence; nor satisfied to know that, under this healing influence, the inveteracy of evil dispositions is broken up, and a real advance made in virtue, he asks some sensible evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and would fain so dissect his own consciousness as to bring the presence of the Divine agent under palpable examination. Or he seeks for some such extraordinary turbulence of emotion as may seem unquestionably to surpass the powers and course of nature. Fraught with these wishes, he continually gazes upon the variable surface of his own feelings, in unquiet expectation of a supernatural troubling of the waters. The silent rise of the well-spring of purity and peace he neither heeds nor values; for nothing less than the eddies and sallies of religious passion can assure him that he is “born from above.”

A delusive notion of this kind at once diverts attention from the cultivation and practice of the virtues, and becomes a fermenting principle of frothy agitations, that either work themselves off in the sourness of an uncharitable temper, or are followed by physical melancholies, or perhaps by a relaxation of the moral sentiments, which leaves the heart exposed to the seductions of vicious pleasure. Thus the religious life, instead of being a sunshine of augmenting peace and

hope, is made up of an alternation of ecstasies and despondencies ; or worse—of devotional fervors and sensual indulgencies. The same error naturally brings with it a habit of referring to other, and to much less satisfactory tests of christian character than the influence of religion upon the temper and conduct. So it happens that practical morality, from being slighted as the only valid credential of profession, comes, too often to be thought of as something which, though it may be well in its way, is a separable adjunct to true piety. pp. 70, 71.

The following is taken from the section, which treats of enthusiasm in the application of the doctrine of a particular providence. The reader will admire its beauty of thought in some parts, and if he is pious will be soothed and healed by its spirit : while they who need the reproof which it also contains, will hardly escape conviction.

In the divine management of the fortuities of life, there may also be very plainly perceived a dispensation of *moral exercise*, specifically adapted to the temper and powers of the individual. No one can look back upon his own history without meeting unquestionable instances of this sort of educational adjustment of his lot, effected by means that were wholly independent of his own choice or agency. The casual meeting with a stranger, or an unexpected interview with a friend ;—the accidental postponement of affairs ;—the loss of a letter, a shower, a trivial indisposition, the caprice of an associate—these, or similar fortuities, have been the determining causes of events, not only important in themselves, but of peculiar significance and use in that process of discipline which the character of the individual was to undergo. * * * * *

By such strong and nicely fitted movements of Providence, it is that the tasks of life are distributed where best they may be performed, and its burdens apportioned where best they may be sustained. By accidents of birth or connection, the bold, the sanguine, the energetic, are led into the front of the field of arduous exertion, while by similar fortuities, quite as often as by choice, the pusillanimous, the fickle, the faint-hearted, are suffered to spend their days under the shelter of ease, and in the recesses of domestic tranquillity.

But who shall profess so to understand his particular temper, and so to estimate his talents, as might qualify him to anticipate the special dispensations of Providence in his own case ? Such knowledge, surely, every wise man will confess to be "too wonderful" for him. To the supreme intelligence alone it belongs to distribute to every one his lot, and to "fix the bounds" of his abode. Yet there are persons, whose persuasion of what *ought* to be their place and destiny is so confidently held, that a long life of disappointment does not rob them of the hypothesis of self-love ; and just in proportion to the firmness of their faith in a particular providence, will be their propensity to quarrel with heaven, as if it debarred them from their right in deferring to realize the anticipated destiny.—Presumption, when it takes its commencement in religion, naturally ends in impiety.

Men who look no farther than the present scene, may, with less glaring inconsistency, vent their vexation in accusing the blindness and partiality of fate which has held their eminent talents and their peculiar merits so long under the veil of obscurity ; but those who acknowledge at once a disposing providence and a future life, might surely find considerations proper for imposing silence upon such murmurings of disappointed ambition. Let it be granted to a man that his vanity does not deceive him, when he complains that adverse fortune has prevented his entering the very course upon which nature has fitted him to shine, and has, with unrelenting severity confined him, year after year, to a drudgery in which he was not qualified to win even a common measure of success ;—all this may be true : but if the complainant be a christian, he cannot find it difficult to admit that this clashing of his fortune with his capacities or his tastes may have been the very exercise necessary to insure his ultimate welfare. Who will deny that the reasons of the divine conduct towards those who are in train-

ing for an endless course must always lie at an infinite distance beyond the range of created vision ! Who shall venture even to surmise what course of events may best foster the germ of an imperishable life ;—or who conjecture what contraventions of the hopes and interests of an individual may find their reasons and necessity in the wide universe of consequences incalculably remote ? pp. 134—137.

The whole section is admirable for the weight of its truth, and the closeness and accuracy of observation which it indicates, and is alike calculated to encourage humble, contented, thankful piety, and to rebuke the pride, impatience and ingratitude of enthusiasm. The section on christian philanthropy is highly searching in its character. It deals in the motives of this evangelical grace, and shows that there is such a nice balancing of them involved in the spirit and requirements of the gospel, as to allow scarcely a pretext for enthusiasm. The existence therefore, of this pernicious infusion, is so much the more to be condemned. It occurred to us in reading this part of the work, that possibly a close observer of human nature might convict the author of departing somewhat from real life—a fault with which he is not often chargeable. There is, if we mistake not, a shade of exaggeration, a sort of fanciful and over-wrought representation on the subject of benevolence, or the enthusiastic violations of that great law of christianity. Still, generally speaking, the duties which he points out are of a trying character, and the danger, of which he gives the warning, is an unhappy reality. The learning and good sense displayed in his account of the Ancient Church, and the ingredients of Ancient Monachism, will recommend it strongly to the attention of the enlightened reader. In the last section on the Probable Extension of Christianity, the author's reasoning is clear and conclusive, the argument is, in many respects, a most triumphant confirmation of the truth of the gospel. The whole is well calculated to affect the unbeliever with a salutary alarm. The closing sentence is most significant in that view.

Yet in passing this subject it may be suggested to those who, notwithstanding that they admit the truth of christianity, constantly deride genuine piety whenever it comes in their way, that though the apparent course of events seems to indicate a gradual improvement, such as would give time to opposers to choose the wiser part, and to range themselves quietly in the train of the conquering religion, the general tenor of scriptural predictions holds out a different prospect, and gives great reason to suppose that the final triumph of the Gospel is to be ushered in by some sudden and vindictive visitation, which shall arrest impiety in its full career, and deny forever to the then impenitent the option of making a better choice. p. 302.

“Saturday Evening,” which title seems to have been chosen, for the double purpose of expressing the author's desire not “to trench either upon the season or the office of public instruction,” but only to come very near it, and of referring to the expectation

now so generally entertained among christians, that our own times are precursive of the promised era of *rest*, is a book somewhat miscellaneous and desultory in its character. The topics of which the writer treats are many and various, including some of the most interesting in practical religion; and though several of them have a slight tie, and follow in a natural order, in the progress of sentiment, yet the connecting principle does not prevail throughout. The pieces as a whole seem to have been produced as occasion offered, and originally with little reference to continuity; or if the writer conceived a train of thought from beginning to end it is not obvious to the reader, nor is it easy to discover why one topic rather than another was chosen, or why it followed as it did. Had it been poetry, we should have been disposed on some accounts to call it another Cowper's Task, as taking a bird's eye view of the field of spiritual religion, as that poem does of the field of nature—a view wide, free, and multi-form. Yet as it is not poetry exactly, nor a book of essays, at least it does not profess to be such, nor a volume of sermons, for the writer would not be thought to assume the Sabbath's chief employment, it is a sort of non-descript, an anomaly, as to the class of productions in which it should be placed. But though we know not what to call it, as a distinctive work, we feel at no loss with respect to its claims, in an intellectual and moral point of view. Here it must take, if not the highest, yet a very high rank. As a whole, perhaps it is not equal to the Natural History of Enthusiasm. At least it is not so finished a production, so condensed in thought, or transparent and pure in style. Its want of unity is a disadvantage to it compared with that work. It led the author into a more rambling manner—to be more scattered, and sometimes less distinct. The unrestrained pursuit of his thoughts, and their superabundance, induced him to give utterance to them in disjointed masses, in irregular files, in every interlined and counter shape and form. They burst forth as if from an imprisoned fountain, coursing over all the modes of human address, and discharging themselves in endless parentheses, and sinuosities of style. An idea is exhibited in bold relief in several continuous sentences—then in like guise come its limitations or exceptions, almost nullifying (to use a word unhappily too common in these days,) the preceding statements—then the original idea is taken up again, backed with another string of sentences, which affording new illustration, leads to another antagonist thought, and thus the writer is driven on or is set back, till neither his readers nor perhaps himself, can tell where they are likely to land. In this respect it is a strange book, and marred and disfigured. But then as though to indemnify us for all this, it has passages of sur-

passing felicity—of overwhelming interest, set forth with an imagery beautiful and impressive as if it were caught from heaven—filling and more than filling the mind with bright and weighty truths—holding the reader's soul, we may say, in solution, with power to mold it into some new form of elemental consciousness. The book, though liable to abatements and exceptions, which do not belong to the former work, yet makes a more solemn impression—it possesses a greater variety of matter—it goes still more deeply into the hidden springs of action. Its topics, distributed through twenty-nine chapters, cannot of course be particularly mentioned here. Some of the abler discussions, as they struck our minds were, those on the Means of Mercy, the Church and the World, the State of Seclusion, the Limits of Revelation, the Power of Rebuke, the Family Affection of Christianity. We have not room for many extracts, but we would call the attention to the following as an admirable specimen of reasoning on religious subjects, from the great principles of human nature.

This sense of the fitness of RETRIBUTION flashes upon us, in some form, every hour. We cannot read a page of history, we cannot listen to the news of the day, we cannot walk the streets, without forcibly admitting the idea, that there must be a vindication of right: nay, we often court the expectation of it;—sometimes as witnesses, and sometimes as victims of oppression, or of cruelty, or of rapacity, we fly to the belief of ultimate justice; and, even apart from any *vindictive* feeling, are agonized if we imagine that the controversy between the oppressor and the oppressed shall never—never, be adjusted. If, at any time, the films of false philosophy have deceived us into the opinion that vice and virtue are one and the same—this sophistry shares the fate of many other sophistries in practical matters;—that is to say, it is instantly and irrecoverably scattered by our first brunt with some real affair of common life, that appeals to the ordinary sentiments of humanity:—the illusion fades—truth and nature stand out, and speak aloud, and we dare not refuse to hear them.

But if there is to be a retribution *at all*, if *any* crime or cruelty the most atrocious which history records, or which history has forgotten, is to be brought to account in after-life, and is to receive its due award of chastisement;—if the authority of God, as Governor of men, is to be in any manner asserted, and maintained, then is it possible to believe that such retribution shall be otherwise than ABSOLUTELY IMPARTIAL? and when we say *impartial*, we must mean that it shall be in the strictest sense UNIVERSAL.—It must bear alike, and equally, upon every responsible agent, and must come close home to the entire merit and demerit of each. Shall smaller offences escape inquiry, while egregious sins only are brought into court? This could not be; for the perpetrator of enormous crimes might justly turn round upon his exculpated companions, and affirm, that if all circumstances of temptation and original disposition were fairly weighed, the actual balance of guilt would be in his favor; inasmuch as some who had *seemed* to sin less, had actually sinned more, by sinning with fewer inducements, or with more advantage for virtue. Or shall Supreme Justice take notice only of those offences that have in fact been peculiarly pernicious in their consequences, and the occasions of misery to others? This mode of proceeding would be liable to an objection equally conclusive. For the offender, so singled out on account of the actual mischief he had caused, would be entitled to complain that his fate was ruled, not by law or intrinsic demerit; but by *accidents*, over which he had no control; and it would be easy to find instances of much worse *intention* than his own, which, on this system would altogether escape unpunished. There is in fact no justice, that is not universal justice. Justice altogether is nullified,

and disgraced, by even a single, and the smallest instance of oblivion, or inequality, or perversion of facts. Who would come forward and profess to wish that the law, which is taking effect upon his neighbor, should turn aside from himself?

* * * * *

But now, may it not seem as if the offences of men—themselves insignificant as they are—were utterly unworthy of becoming the subject of judicial proceeding in the court of Heaven? Unworthy of judicial proceedings!—Is any such rule acted upon, or admitted on earth? Let us look to the mightiest empire that ever has existed, the sovereigns and the chiefs of which have taken to themselves so vast an importance, that the welfare of whole provinces might not be weighed against their most trivial convenience or pleasure. And then let us seek for the very meanest of the degraded beings that lie obscure in the quarters of want. Is the wretch ambitious of distinction? would he fain draw upon himself the eyes of the mighty?—does he covet to stand among princes?—Then let him insult the majesty of government:—let him but commit a crime, and his wish is accomplished. Though nothing else could possibly have given him importance—Treason shall do it. And it shall presently be seen, that the highest personages of state are busy with his interests:—No affair of the realm is deemed so urgent as that the hearing of the cause should be finally neglected, or the accused be suffered to make a jest of royal power. Whether he is to be condemned or absolved, punished or pardoned, he must at all events be made amenable to law, and be dealt with in some manner which shall leave no stain either upon the principles, or the administration of the empire. And this rule of procedure is valid and constant, just in proportion to the excellence, the equity, and the firmness or vigor of a government; and of the very best governments this is the praise, that justice is carried home to all persons alike, great or mean. In a state the most free and wise that can be imagined, the sovereign himself would never be thought to forfeit his dignity, though he were seen to be assiduously employed (if needful) day after day, in ascertaining the guilt or innocence of the very lowest of his subjects. Do we approve this principle? Unquestionably then it shall be found to belong to that Government which is absolutely good and just.

Yes, if nothing else can confer importance upon man—his crimes shall give him consequence. If there were no other argument for a future life, Sin would furnish one, never to be refuted. We need descend into no depths of abstruse reasoning here:—the simplest notions are conclusive enough. There is a cause standing over between the impartial judge and ourselves: and a time for the hearing and decision of it must certainly come. If indefinitely delayed, and forgotten, all loyal orders must harbor dissatisfaction and fear; while all who have actually been called to account and punished, will protest against the partiality. If conscience be but awake, the transgressor, as he stands at the verge of the present life, may thus properly decide upon his own fate.—“I have sinned and perverted that which was right.—Let me hide myself in the darkness of the grave! No; for God’s ministers and all beings—good and evil, shall demand me at the hands of Death, and forbid I should be forgotten. The dust may not screen me—the clouds may not cover me.—Corruption may not say I am lost and gone. The highest tribunal is waiting my appearance; and unless I am made there to stand, the honor of all government is blasted—the perfections of God impugned. True, I am insignificant; but yet am party in a cause in which the wisdom, and purity, and power of the Eternal God are in question.”

* * * * *

We do not indeed deny that the first magistrate, in a vigorous and equitable government, may, if he so please, pardon the culprit; far from it. But we absolutely deny that he can (unless feeble or corrupt) fail to take cognizance in *some manner*, of each, and of every cause, which, after having been remitted in turn by inferior courts, is formally assigned to himself as supreme. To pardon an offender upon his submission and confession, is not to wink at crime, or to lay oblivion upon law;—unless indeed pardon has so become the *standing rule* of administration, that men are fain to doubt whether there exists at all the power or the will to punish. In such a case penitence and pardon would both be mockeries; and neither to be respected more than the motion of wooden figures, the one of which always lifts the arm when the other lets it fall.

Can we actually bring together, or hold in union, any such incongruous ideas, as those of a system of law and retribution on the one hand ;—and the practice of *Universal Pardon*, dealt out to offenders by the ultimate and Supreme Power? If *all* are punished, and punished equitably, none indeed can complain ; and no confusion is brought in. But if *all* are pardoned ; and pardoned as a mere act of clemency, the very substance of government is made nugatory. If pardon is the *rule*—punishment the *exception*, then law is blamed ; or administration proved imbecile. In good and firm governments, *punishment* will be the rule, and *pardon* the exception :—and yet even this exceptive pardon sullies the brilliancy of power and wisdom, unless clearly it is seen to spring from some law higher or more comprehensive than the law which has been violated. To PARDON WITHOUT REASON is an error, on the part of a sovereign, of which the same may be said as is said of other errors—that though a single instance will not destroy a man's reputation, the frequent repetition of it infallibly will do so. A man may be weak once, or thrice ; and retrieve his character ; but if he be weak daily, what is thought of him? pp. 54—58.

After these extracts it might seem almost unnecessary to dwell on the peculiar characteristics of the author. Were he an ordinary man we should not do it, but we trust our readers will bear with us, in the following remarks, from the interest which they must feel in a mind of such a cast.

There is probably nothing in respect to this writer, which has struck the public with more force than *his profound analysis of the hidden feelings of the heart*. To this quality of his writings we have already adverted more than once. Here is the principal secret of his power. An author who can show us what we are—who can lay bare our moral texture—who can depict the play of the passions and trace the operation of motives—who, by a stroke of his pen, can throw us back upon some early, long-forgotten emotion, or recall to us thoughts which we have often revolved in our minds, but never perhaps embodied in distinct and uttered conceptions, will always obtain a hearing. Such a writer will be read with intense interest. Though he may present many dark pictures of our hearts, still we are gratified with the exhibition of his sagacity in discovering that which is so secret, and with the consciousness that he and others have thought and felt just as we have done. Such a man is master of the deep sensibilities of the soul. He touches the chord by which he can awaken them at his pleasure. Our author answers, in an eminent degree, to this character. He depicts the heart, and lays it open to inspection in all the variety of its phases. Readers, in a few pages, learn that he is familiar with their moral constitution. Their secret fancies, musings, queries, likings, and antipathies on the subject of religion, are traced with an exactness, which might make it seem, as if his information had been obtained by a sort of intuition. Deep within the seat of consciousness, they feel his hand probing their sorest ulcers. His torch of truth, penetrating into what the author himself has styled “the inner circle of the soul,” throws light upon the corruptions they would fain smother,

or brings into clearer view those harmonies of knowledge, love, and holiness, which divine grace may have infused there. By some new, original, forcible illustration, he applies a test of moral character, as decisive often, as it is striking. We doubt not that an enlightened judgment will accord generally, with the tests which are thus scattered throughout his writings; and we rejoice that his talent for analyzing the secret feelings of the heart, has been so successfully employed in discriminating between "the precious and vile," in religion. A quality of this kind, cannot be well estimated by a single paragraph or two. It is rather to be judged of in the aggregate. Still we venture to offer the following instances from Saturday Night.

Nothing can be less like arrogance or conceit than the feeling with which a great mind inwardly confesses its unquestioned superiority.—Such is that *respect for humanity* which the man of magnanimous sentiments entertains, that it is with sincere pain he recognizes at any time in other men those deficiencies, or that meanness, or baseness, or frivolity, whence he might draw a comparison in his own favor. As often as any such comparison obtrudes itself, gratulation gives way to shame, or compassion for others. It is to him a heavy grievance that men should be blinded by prejudice, perverted by passion, corrupted by interest;—that they should be ignorant;—infirm in judgment;—sordid in conduct. The levity of mankind, and their corruption, alike distress him, for they controvert that feeling he would fain always cherish, of complacency towards all things, and of esteem for all. Tell him to think with pleasure of his own expansion of mind and nobility of temper:—this is but another manner to enumerate the dishonors of his fellow men!

Conceptions and emotions of this order are justly deemed *romantic* when not found in combination with energy and consistency of conduct:—that is to say, when they are *mere* conceptions, and *mere* emotions. But the man who thinks them so, however recommended by the active virtues;—the man who secretly contemns the humility and humanity of great minds as if it were a *weakness*, may be sure that there is a region of thought of which he has no more knowledge than the mole has of the vastness and splendor of the upper skies, where the eagle soars. pp. 250, 251.

An indispensable qualification for the vigorous exercise of the Power of Rebuke, by the christian minister, is such a conviction of the truth of christianity, as shall render him proof against all assaults from within, and from without. And is there not reason to fear that, in this qualification, multitudes of christian teachers are wanting? Every one who has reflected maturely upon the workings of the human mind, perceives that, whether the fact be confessed or concealed—the stress of the controversy concerning the divine mission of Christ depends upon the doctrine of future punishment. The affirmations of our Lord and his apostles on this subject, though they fall in with the smothered forebodings of conscience, in every man's bosom, give a distinct form to apprehensions from which the mind strives by all means, if possible, to escape; and which it will never cordially admit until the moral faculties be rectified. The quarrel of the world with christianity comes to its issue upon this doctrine of future retribution. And as often as any mind recedes from the spirituality of its perceptions, it falls back upon this disagreement; and at such times, if the argumentative conviction of the truth of christianity be imperfect, the darkness and perplexity of scepticism will come in upon the soul like a flood. pp. 180, 181.

The highly difficult work of reclaiming the infatuated religionist demands a simplicity of mind, which must unfit a man for the delicate task of recommending and palliating the dogmas and practices (entire) of a party—let that party be as pure as it may. When, in obedience to certain maxims of policy or discretion (which, however learnedly excused, fall immeasurably short of true wisdom) we

step forwards as the apologists of things which all right minded men feel (whether they say so or not) to be utterly indefensible, we sever the nerve of our moral and intellectual strength, by the very act. No expectation can be more egregious than that of finding ourselves *men* to-morrow, if we must be sophists to-day. There is a law of continuity, of homogeneity, in the human mind;—there is an equalizing of powers, which makes it take its permanent character from the humiliations to which at any time it submits, and which demands that it shall go to its place on the scale of dignity and power, not according to the highest elevation it ever reaches, or may aspire to, nor even midway between the highest and the lowest point; but near to the lowest. Spontaneously and consciously to submit to degradation, even for an hour, is forever to be degraded. pp. 188, 189.

In connection with his analysis of moral exercises, it may be remarked that his analysis of the intellectual part of man is scarcely less remarkable. The following may be taken as specimens.

If the characteristic difference between strong and feeble minds were asked for, it might be replied—It is found in the habit (in the former case) of adhering firmly to truths which have once been settled on satisfactory evidence; and (in the other) in that of calling such principles into question, ever and again. But if it were required to distinguish *great minds* from *strong ones*, we must say that the latter so hold their system of established truths, as to shut out their prospect of what may lie beyond it; while the former, without quitting the ground of demonstration—without confounding the known with the hypothetical, never lose sight of that more distant range of things, which the human mind is permitted dimly to discern, though not distinctly to explore. p. 200.

Yet there is always a counterpoise in great minds between the desire of action—the vigorous passion for achievement, on the one part, and that tendency, on the other, to repose—that taste for peace—that calm residence of the soul upon its centre, which impels it (with an apparent inconsistency) now to stand forth, and now to recede from the noise and confusion of the world. We might find plenty of great minds, if we could but relinquish, in our definition, this special characteristic—a tranquil taste, and *the capability of repose*. In every circle one may meet with men of prodigious energy, and of indefatigable zeal;—but they are such as exist only exteriorly, or in action;—rest, when it must be taken, is with them an abrupt cessation of their intellectual life;—it is not another and graceful mode of it. Will it seem romantic to affirm that the characteristic serenity of minds truly great is an instinct of the soul, indicating its destiny to a future and endless life?—for even though that life were believed to consist of a perpetuity of action; nevertheless, the anticipation of it, fraught as it is with the notion of infinity, and of absolute perfection, must always be attended with the idea of peace and stillness.

If it yet seems as if some one infallible characteristic of genuine magnanimity were wanting, we should at once name unalterable modesty, as that mark. That it is so might be argued, not merely from the evidence of facts, establishing the point that great men have always shone with this grace, as assume it *a priori*, inasmuch as elevation and grandeur of soul consists in, or is derived from, an habitual contemplation of universal principles. This habit of the mind contains a tacit comparison which is of the very essence of humility. The spirit that has no modesty, manifestly has no sense of abstract excellence; and therefore can have no greatness; or, at least, is not holding converse with things greater than itself;—hence it grasps nothing that might aid it to spring up, or to rise above its actual level. pp. 247, 248.

The human mind is so constituted as to admit freely the play of independent and conflicting motives, even if it obeys always the one motive that is paramount. And high culture much increases this susceptibility of the mind towards diverse or contradictory impulses; so that while the uninstructed, when borne onward by a ruling principle, forget all secondary considerations; the more intelligent,

though not less steady and consistent *in action* (perhaps more so,) yet continue to hold converse with reasons they have repudiated; and to traverse again and again the ground of their firmest convictions. p. 36.

A bold startling air of paradox may be mentioned as another characteristic of the writer, in the works before us. This, though in general not a safe mode of writing, has nevertheless its advantages. It draws attention to the thought; and the mind of the reader, while settling the meaning of the apparently absurd proposition, is the more struck with the real truth, which it partly hides and partly reveals. This mode of exhibition adequately sustained, throws an aspect of vivacity and sprightliness over a work, and accordingly our author with no small share of sagacity, has availed himself of it at times, to set forth the important sentiments which he wished to inculcate. The consciousness of strength, and of having truth on his side, can alone, however, warrant a person in advancing tenets, which, though correct in fact, are contrary to the common opinion of mankind, or carry on the face of them an absurdity. It is probably owing to this cause, as well as to some others, that our author has often been charged with obscurity. There is occasionally a paragraph, which the reader, if he is not commendably patient, must leave in uncertainty as to its precise import. In the majority of cases, however, where the paradoxical and highly abstract turn of the thought produces a momentary perplexity, the reader will be well rewarded, by giving to the page a second perusal. Perhaps we may find in the following casual remark of the author, the reason which, in connection with his habits of thought, induced him to adopt his somewhat peculiar mode of statement. "It is indeed," he says, "always well that writers should labor to attain perspicacity, and simplicity and vivacity; but is it well when they feel themselves compelled (as in terror,) to avoid whatever supposes in the reader, high culture and intelligence?"

Again, *the rich and beautiful imagery with which the writer clothes his thoughts, and in general the force and felicity of his descriptions* are a striking feature in his works. These will have appeared in the extracts already given: but single sentences may be adduced with a view to convey a more definite idea, particularly of that sort of style which seems to paint the conceptions of the mind, in which the author so much abounds.

"If things spiritual in the force of reality rested on our hearts, we should in a moment start out from our niches of marble formality, and press up to the altar of philanthropy, each bringing the loathed bundle of his prejudices in his hand to be taken up no more."

"Let but some hotly agitated question of policy or political

economy cease to be vigorously treated, and yet continue to be a matter of common conversation, and we shall find in ten years, or seven, perhaps in three, that words, phrases, and wonted forms of expression on such subjects have slipped their meaning; and being disburdened of the weight which they once carried, have taken the wing, and float vague and idle in upper air."

"The attractions, the dangers, the urgent interests of the present state form (we may say) a screen, which, with its gaudy and various colors, its painted pomps and trickeries, hangs on every side before the eye of man, encircling his theater of exercise, and fencing out from his knowledge, the world of intellectual life."

"The swelling and rolling flood of human life moves on in billows so brief and proud, that in rising to the brow of each watery ridge, nothing of the general expanse is beheld, nothing seen but the surge and fall of the precursive wave."

A writer, who, on fitting occasions, can set forth his thoughts in an imagery so bold and rich—in a manner so lively and picturesque, is master of a talent which will procure him readers, and which he should turn to the best account. In our author it is well employed, as a vehicle of his startling, original, profound conceptions; and directed as it generally is, by sound judgment and correct taste, it adds to the charms of his otherwise fascinating compositions. We do not, however, consider his style to be unexceptionable throughout. It is faulty in some respects, and susceptible of improvement. The occasional hardness and abruptness of its mechanical structure might be laid aside without detriment.

A characteristic above all others to be admired in our author, as exhibited in his works, is *the decided prevalence of deep spiritual religion*. His books bear this delightful signature, so evidently, so prominently, that we suppose none will doubt it—at least none who have themselves known the transforming influences of the gospel. The piece on the Family affection of Christianity, would alone prove the geniality of his spirit to that of all christians, since he could not otherwise have so drawn that spirit to the life. His developement of moral character and feelings, above commented on, is too profound—too accurate—too authenticated not to have been the result of experimental knowledge. The spirituality of the author is indeed manifested in every page, and his constant aim most evidently is to make a deeply religious impression on the minds of readers. There is in fine, a freshness in his sketches of religion, a vitality, a faithfulness to the original, a breadth and fullness of views, which show the strength of his own conviction on the subject, and his claims as a sound spiritual man, on the confidence of the reading public.

While, however, all this may be safely said concerning the

christian spirit of the writer, and the evangelical character of his books, it is proper at the same time to observe, that he appears to be less acquainted with theology as a science, or a body of elementary principles,* having a definable connection with one another, than might have been expected. At least considering in how masterly a manner he has analyzed the feelings of the heart, we have a great sense of disappointment when we find him fail here. The relations of speculative truth, however, he may very naturally have overlooked in a degree, while examining so minutely its practical operation. On this account, his knowledge of the doctrinal religious system of the bible, may have been actually acquired less from a critical examination of the documentary evidence, (a method however, which he highly approves,) than from a sort of internal consciousness, or feeling of their truth. If we are at all correct in this suggestion, it will readily be explained, why the author speaks so slightly of systematic divinity in every shape. While we agree with him in his main principle, that religious truth should be sought from the scriptures, in a manner similar to that in which, according to Bacon, physical truth should be learned from nature—viz. by the inductive process; we would not with the author, go so far as to avoid all attempts to connect it in a system, and to give it proportion. We would not with him, seem to hold it altogether in fragments, and in detached parcels, as if the relation of one truth to another could never be seen, or when seen, could not be at all important. It can readily be explained, also, in the view here taken, how it happens that the author has expressed himself much more unguardedly at times, on important topics, than an accurate and disciplined theologian would have done, or one who nicely comprehended the relations of truth, and the analogy of faith. An instance will be adduced in order to exemplify the present remark. The author in his chapter on the State of Seclusion, (and this world he considers such,) reasoning hypothetically concerning the manner in which probationary beings should be treated, says, "The probationers must not see or know *that*, the knowledge which would at once dissipate the obscurity that invests the questions of right and wrong. They may indeed receive a rule of conduct, and they may be *coldly* informed of the distant consequences of their present course of action; but this information must itself take its place quietly among those reasons that are much more valid than imperative." He soon adds, passing from suppositions to the reality. "And are not such in fact the circumstances of that abode to which the human family is confined?" &c. His plan of remark, and the great principle he would illustrate, seemed to render it necessary that he should represent the condition of probationers, and man-

kind of course, in the above light: and contrary to the obvious declarations and spirit of the scripture, on one point at least, he so represented it. But are mankind in the bible left in "obscurity" as to the question of right and wrong; are they *coldly* informed of the distant consequences of their present course of action? On the contrary, what can be more clear than the whole subject of our duty as there presented—what more heart-stirring than the exhortations and warnings of scripture in reference to the future allotments of men? This is a single instance out of a number which might be substantiated, where the writer appears to have overlooked the exact relations of truth, in pursuing his exposition of independent and isolated principles.

The spirit of our author, as generally manifested in his books, is certainly kind and liberal; yet in some instances, there is an approximation at least towards an opposite feeling, attended with a somewhat hasty and injudicious attack on certain evils, of which it would be difficult to say, whether the attempt to expel them, or their continuance would be the greater calamity. *He* would pull down, however hard it might be to build again. Indeed his mode of condemning present operations for doing good, mixed as they confessedly are with imperfection, and his style of talking about what might be done, show more the strength of his zeal, than the soundness of his discretion. This is apparent in his plan of christian missions, and in representations that are occasionally met with in the books under review. He seems but too little satisfied with things as they are, and has a turn and a talent for fault-finding, which, if they be not regulated by benevolence, might easily lead him to excess. Perhaps it is a too easy charity in us—nevertheless we venture to ask, who would love to surmise, as the author has done, and proclaim his suspicion to the world, even if he believed it? "May it not," he says, "be conjectured that at the present moment, where we shall find one man, (meaning among professors of religion,) who is both sound-minded and truly spiritual, we shall meet with three pusillanimous religionists, and twenty secular believers." Are these then, we ask, the triumphs of the grace of God? Only one out of twenty four members of the christian body among evangelical communities, who can be considered as fit to belong to that body! Only one to twenty who is a true christian! In our blessed revivals of religion, as well as in ordinary times, do we receive into our churches, twenty hypocrites or self-deceivers to one genuine convert? We know not how it is in England, but for the honor of the gospel and for the hope of the world, we trust that nothing like this can be the case in our own country. In our zeal to guard the purity of religion and religious profession, let us not seem to undervalue the achievements of di-

vine mercy, or be willing to diminish the confidence with which piety should labor to confer the saving benefits of religion on lost men. If our author has sometimes made representations of the kind above noticed, we are happy to know that there are others in his works, which are likely to counteract them. On the whole, though by no means faultless, he may be reckoned one of the most powerful, accomplished, and useful writers of the age.

ART. V.—DICKINSON'S PRIZE LETTERS.

Prize Letters to Students, in two parts; By REV. BAXTER DICKINSON, Newark, N. J.

IF there is any one class in our country upon which the philanthropist, the patriot, and the christian, must look with more interest than any other, it is that class which is composed of our active and enterprising young men; especially of those who enjoy the advantages of a liberal education. In almost any circumstances, knowledge is the parent of influence: it gives to one mind the ability of controlling many; and if there are good principles along with it, it may be expected, in proportion to its extent, to help forward the great cause of human happiness. What would Newton, and Bacon, and Locke, and Edwards, have accomplished for the world with only an ordinary degree of knowledge? But we may almost ask, what did they *not* accomplish by means of the actual improvement to which they attained? And if knowledge secures influence in any circumstances, surely there were never circumstances more favorable to give it influence than exist in our own country. We are not trammelled with the fetters of aristocracy. We know nothing, happily, of the influence of mere rank, and have never been taught to do homage to titles, or to respect men for any thing else than their own merits. Here every man may speak and write his own thoughts with perfect freedom; and if he speaks and writes well, he has a fair chance to be heard, and by multitudes; and his thoughts are tried in no worse crucible than reason and common sense. While there is every advantage in this country for knowledge to exert its full influence, there are circumstances connected with the present state and prospects of the country, which render it of the utmost importance that the cultivated intellect of the present and next generation should be directed in a right channel. For it seems to be acknowledged on all hands, that we have reached a critical period in our national history, and that it is to be decided within much less than half a century, what is to be the ultimate destiny

and influence of our government and institutions; whether this land is indeed to be "a name and a praise in the earth," or to be known among the nations as a field of blasted hope, and of political and moral desolation. This mighty question will no doubt be settled before two generations shall have passed away; and hence we naturally look with deep and strong interest not only on the passing movements of the day, on the character and influence of those who have now most to do in regulating our public interests, but also on every thing which will be likely to exert a forming influence on the character of the next generation. There is every reason to believe that our academies, and colleges, and professional institutions of various kinds, enclose at this moment, the germ of far the greater part of the influence which a few years hence will decide all the great questions connected with our national weal or woe. Surely then he cannot be a friend to his country, or a friend to humanity, with whom it is a matter of indifference what is to be the character of the rising generation; especially of that class who are favored with liberal advantages for intellectual culture.

We cannot but regard it as one of the favorable signs of the times, that the class of young men who are in the progress of a liberal education or who are destined to it, have recently awakened a deeper interest in the minds of the reflecting and christian community, than at any former period. One evidence of this is to be found in the annual concert of prayer which has for several of the last years been extensively observed, with especial reference to our literary and professional institutions; and upon which we think we may say without presumption God has already strongly impressed the seal of his approbation. Another similar evidence we find in the many judicious and seasonable articles which have appeared in our periodicals on the same subject; and we may add, in several books which have recently been written to subserve the same purpose. Among these, the work of Mr. Dickinson, the title of which stands at the head of this article, holds an important place. While it is *especially* designed for students, the greater part of it will be found applicable to young men of any occupation, particularly those in the higher walks of life. The design which the author contemplates is twofold:—to establish, first, the importance of a fixed belief in divine revelation, and a cordial reception of its truths; and secondly, the importance of an elevated standard of christian character. This plan very happily meets the case of each of the two great divisions of the class which the book contemplates—those whose religious opinions are yet to be established, and religious character begun; and who of course are opposed to the various forms

of infidelity and irreligion; and those who have made a christian profession and hopefully entered on a christian life, but who nevertheless, from the circumstances in which they are placed, are peculiarly liable to become unduly conformed to the world, and to contract a habit of comparative religious indifference. We are quite sure that neither of these classes can read this book attentively and seriously, without finding it a most useful monitor and guide, amidst the circumstances of temptation and peril by which they are surrounded.

In the remarks which we intend to make in connection with this valuable work, we shall endeavor to fall in, as far as we can, with the general design of the author, by suggesting some of the sources of danger to the moral principles and habits of students, especially such as are connected with public institutions; and to advert briefly, as we pass along, to some of the means of preventing the contemplated evil. We shall consider distinctly the dangers incident to each of the two classes to which we have referred.

We set out with the broad principle that it is of great importance that *all* our educated young men should be brought under the influence of religion. That this is important in respect to that class who are destined to the christian ministry, none but the infidel will question; but it is not so readily perceived how this should be important in regard to those who are destined to other professions, or to no profession at all. We say nothing here of the personal value of religion to every individual, as connected with his own immortal interests; but we say that it is of immense moment that all educated men should be religious, on account of the extended influence which they must exert upon other minds. Happily there are not wanting examples of men of high intellectual culture, out of the clerical profession, to which we may appeal for an illustration of the benign and powerful influence of a devoted piety. There are pious physicians, and pious lawyers, and pious statesmen, who labor as christians in their appropriate sphere; and who often exert a direct influence in favor of the cause of religion, which, if they were ministers of the gospel, would be forbidden to them by the suspicions and jealousies of the multitude. Besides this, all these various classes of cultivated minds, when they are imbued with the influence of religion, are guided in their general movements by a benevolent impulse, and are rendering efficient, though it may be indirect, aid to the great cause of virtue and happiness. If our country is to be preserved from ultimate ruin, who can doubt that this is to be effected through the influence of religion; and where will that influence be likely to be felt to better purpose than in our national councils—at the very fountain of political life and action? We rejoice in

the fact that so many of our educated and gifted young men are directing their attention to the christian ministry—the exigences of the church and the world demand it, and are likely to demand it more and more; but we are far from feeling regret when we see young men of the same class entering the other professions with right motives; for we are fully satisfied that each of these professions furnishes a field for christian usefulness; and we do not wish to see it abandoned to a reckless and unprincipled ambition. Would Wilberforce, or Howard, or Thornton, or John Mason Good, have probably done more for the moral benefit of their fellow men or the glory of Christ, if their lives had been spent in the hallowed vocation of a christian minister? Such men, we repeat, are needed in all professions; and in whatever department of action we find them laboring, provided they labor with facility and effect, we can hardly consider them out of their place. We would not sanction the principle that every pious student must of course direct his eye to the ministry; but we would earnestly maintain that religion is of immense importance to every cultivated man, let his profession or occupation be what it may.

There is danger from various sources that students in the course of their education, may be allured into the paths of skepticism and downright infidelity. One source of danger is found in the fact that in the great majority of cases the youth who enter our literary institutions, have previously had little or no instruction in respect to the evidences of christianity. They may have been accustomed in most instances to attend regularly on the preaching of the gospel; and many of them, from having pious parents, may have had some early impressions of the general importance of religion, and may have been trained to regard it with decent respect; but neither in the one case nor the other is there ordinarily found an intelligent conviction of the divinity of the christian system. If we do not greatly mistake, there is an error on the part of most ministers in preaching so little on the evidences of christianity; dwelling much, (as indeed they should do) on the doctrines of the gospel, but rarely exhibiting the great foundation on which these doctrines are built. The consequence of this is, that young persons especially are left at the mercy of every caviler; and that kind of general impression that christianity is true which is formed under the influence of such inadequate teaching, is far too weak to resist the wiles of an accomplished skeptic. We have known instances, (and we are sure that such instances are not uncommon) in which young men have entered a literary institution without having a single doubt that the bible is a revelation from God; and yet as their faith was little more than a prejudice of education, it gradually gave way, as it was assailed

by the cavils of unbelief, to absolute skepticism. If previous to their being brought into circumstances of temptation, they had been instructed in the evidences of christianity, there is little doubt that they might have withstood the attack upon their principles; and not unfrequently their intellectual conviction of the truth of the bible, might, through the influences of God's Spirit, have ripened into a cordial and sanctifying belief of its doctrines.

Another source of danger is found in the fact that in every literary institution in which a large number of youth are assembled, it may always be expected that there will be some, whose moral and religious principles have already been corrupted. It happens not unfrequently that these are young men who have been accustomed to move in the higher walks of life, who if they are not originally more gifted, are more accomplished, than most with whom they are associated; and not improbably they have all the influence that wealth and family can give them; and perhaps withal have a fascinating address, and an easy way of gaining access both to the understanding and the heart. Let but a solitary individual with these advantages enter a literary institution, and become the daily companion of a large number of unsuspecting young men, and it will be strange indeed if he does not soon prove that "one sinner destroyeth much good." Let there be several such characters scattered through a community, and if special means are not used to counteract their influence, it will inevitably work like the leaven of death. What renders their success more probable is, that their infidelity from being seen in the splendor of their own genius or accomplishments, loses its deformity or hatefulness; and the unreflecting youth while he listens to the sophistry of skepticism, is cheated into the delusion that to become an infidel will confer some claim to intellectual superiority.

If it were possible to know the whole process by which any youth, especially in such circumstances as we are supposing, is brought to the point of renouncing christianity, there is little doubt that it would appear that this melancholy result was to be referred in no small degree to the pride of intellect. Young men are exceedingly ambitious of distinction; and because the path which the gospel marks out is plain and broad and open, so that the simplest intellect can walk in it, they are too prone to leave it in pursuit of something which they imagine more out of the range of weak minds and vulgar prejudices. They contrive strangely to deceive themselves in respect to this matter; for the real truth is that while a few gifted minds have gone off into the mazes of infidelity, and have operated with tremendous energy against the gospel, the great multitude who have risen to high intellectual distinction, have acknowledged christianity to be a religion from heaven, and not a few have stood forth in the ranks of its open advocates.

The youth who should be mainly influenced by a desire to have his name associated with those who have had the highest character for genius and learning, would, even on this principle, if he acted consistently, hold fast his belief in divine revelation ; for it admits not of question that the greatest and most accomplished minds have cordially embraced the gospel, and have regarded it as the highest wisdom to surrender themselves implicitly to divine teaching.

We are not of the number of those who would proscribe the Latin and Greek classics as part of a liberal education ; still we cannot doubt that as they are sometimes studied, there may be danger of their exerting an influence unfriendly to the moral character, and especially to a strong and settled conviction of the truth of the gospel. Every one knows that there are parts of some of the Latin and Greek poets—though they are now excluded from the books read in most of our colleges—which are of a flagrantly immoral tendency, and which are fitted to strengthen the vicious propensities on the one hand and to cover virtue with blushes on the other. This likewise is unhappily true, to an equal extent of many English works, which are highly popular at the present day—of the writings of Byron, Bulwar and many others. We believe that the minds of the young can be guarded against contamination, from both these quarters by the watchful care of parents and teachers ; though we are quite sure that without strict attention in making suitable selections, and suggesting proper cautions, there may be great danger that the student, even while he professes his belief in christianity, may become deeply and dreadfully imbued with polluting principles.

But perhaps a more fruitful source of infidelity than any other in our literary institutions as well as every where else, is the strength of vicious propensities. A youth of a religious education and good habits, falls into bad company ; and under the influence of temptation his sober and regular habits soon give place to a course of irregular and criminal indulgences. This of course is not done without a severe conflict with conscience, and without painful recollections of the past and gloomy forebodings of the future ; and one way of getting the mastery over these internal remonstrances is by persuading himself that conscience is a bugbear, and all religion a delusion. When this is done, the inward conflict ceases, the path of vice becomes comparatively smooth and easy, and the heart is "hard as the nether millstone." No man would ever be a speculative infidel, if he did not suppose there was some purpose to be answered by it, beyond the mere pleasure of contemplating a favorite theory. The ultimate object is always of a practical nature : it is nothing less than to stop the tormenting corrosions of conscience, and to strew with flowers the path

of transgression. There is great danger that every young man as he becomes vicious in practice, will become an infidel in theory; and just in proportion as any literary institution harbors flagrant immorality and crime, it holds out a lure to the path of open infidelity.

If there is so much danger that young men in the course of their education will become skeptical, it is a matter of great moment that every possible means should be used to prevent this evil. And we fully believe that means may be used and in some of our institutions actually are used, which will neutralize to a great extent the danger incident to such a condition: otherwise we should be driven to the conclusion that our institutions for the education of young men could scarcely be regarded as a public blessing.

Every seminary, especially every college in which youth are assembled for the purpose of education, ought to include some distinct provision for gaining a knowledge of the evidences and doctrines of christianity. We refer not here to the fact that every student should be obliged regularly to attend public worship on the sabbath; for this we believe is uniformly done in this country, unless there may be an exception or two in the case of institutions avowedly of no religious character, but really infidel; but what we intend is that there should be included in the course of study, and commenced at as early a period as possible, some practical and systematic view of the holy scriptures. Perhaps this could not be done in a more effectual way than by the introduction of bible classes—a measure which we know has already to some extent been adopted; and though there were to be nothing compulsory in respect to the attendance on this exercise, it is believed that it might easily be conducted in such a manner, that there would be few who would not consider it a privilege to attend upon it. Indeed let the exercise assume whatever character it might, it would be of great importance that it should be rendered as attractive as possible; for it would be idle to expect that young men feeling no special interest in the subject of religion, should be much interested in any religious exercise of a heavy and prosing character. There should be connected with every such institution at least one instructor, who is capable of conducting to advantage such an exercise as that to which we refer; who, without wearying the patience of the students with too much of minute detail, can bring out scripture facts and principles in such a manner, as to awaken their interest, and exalt their views of the bible, and by God's blessing, secure a deep and permanent impression. If every literary institution, besides requiring an occasional recitation on the evidences of christianity, should include some efficient course of instruction in the bible of a private nature, in which

there would be an opportunity to hold up divine truth in the most familiar and practical manner, it would be not only a security against the inroads of infidelity, but would serve to establish an intelligent and abiding conviction of the divinity of the gospel.

Another means of preventing the same evil, is the utmost vigilance and efficiency on the part of those to whose management our institutions are confided. It is admitted on all hands that gross immorality in students, calls for the exercise of discipline; and immorality of some kinds and beyond a certain point, constitutes in the eye of every one a sufficient reason for a temporary or final exclusion from the institution with which the offender is connected. Now we maintain, that the same rule should be applied in respect to open and avowed infidelity, especially where there is a disposition evinced to propagate infidel sentiments. One youth of this character in the midst of such a community as we are contemplating, may do irreparable injury to a multitude. It is his daily business to sow the seeds of corruption and moral death, and the work in which he is engaged, unless Almighty grace interpose to prevent, must in all probability have its issue in the ruin of immortal souls. We do not say that the mere fact that a youth in these circumstances has no belief in the gospel, provided he does not attempt to *propagate* his infidel views, ought to be a sufficient reason for his being sent away from a literary institution; though his very presence, if he were known to be an infidel, we should consider dangerous; but we do maintain that when he is known to be busy in corrupting others, either by his conversation, or by putting into their hands infidel books, it is imperatively due to that community of youth, due to parental affection and parental hopes, due to the best interests of society and of the church, that such an individual if he will persevere in such conduct, should immediately be removed. Possibly he may have genius and acquirements which may give him much personal influence, and promise to bring honor to the institution; but this only renders the case so much the worse, for it gives him the more ability to blast and destroy. He ought to be cut off from society on the same ground that an individual attacked with a contagious disease in the midst of numbers who are strongly predisposed to the same, should be removed without delay; for though the infidel may go out into the world and be an infidel still, and may actually beguile many into the path of error, yet he would not in this case have such direct access to those who emphatically constitute the hope of the next generation; he would be throwing poison over the surface of society, but would not infuse it so directly into the very fountains of public virtue and prosperity.

But there is an indirect influence to be exerted in keeping out

infidelity from our institutions, by looking well to the general cause of morality and virtue. If it is true that infidelity and vice have a mutual action and reaction upon each other, then it follows that every effort to check and subdue the vicious propensities of youth, is an effort to save them from the gulf of skepticism. The more there is of paternal vigilance on the part of teachers in respect to the morals of the pupils, the more prompt they are in their endeavors to arrest them in the beginning of evil, and to save them from being hurried away into vicious indulgences, the more energy they display in separating from their community irreclaimable offenders, in short the more zealously and efficiently they labor for the promotion of virtue and piety, so much the more probable is it that infidelity, if there are solitary cases of her existence among them, will not dare to open her lips or hold up her head. Probably as a general rule, most may be accomplished in keeping down infidelity in all its forms, by laboring diligently and earnestly in the grand cause of truth and virtue. Let any institution come under a decidedly religious influence, let there be much of the breathings of devotion in it, and much of the spirit of piety, and much of disinterested and zealous effort for the honor of Christ, and that is the institution to which youth may resort with the least danger to their moral and religious principles.

It ought to be early and habitually impressed upon the minds of students, that it is extremely unsafe to remain in an unsettled state of mind in respect to this great subject. To say nothing of the fact that so long as this continues, there is no approximation towards the possession of that faith without which it is impossible to please God, it ought to be borne in mind that he who stands on this ground stands on the threshold of open infidelity. Perhaps the evidence of christianity is a subject, which he has never distinctly contemplated, having chosen rather to take for granted that the gospel is true than to be at the trouble of finding out reasons for believing it so—even this state of mind, instead of being a security against yielding to infidel temptations, is almost a certain pledge of falling before them. The only safety is in having a conviction built upon evidence; and this must be the result of attention and examination. Let every student from the beginning be kept upon his guard against this habit of indecision. If he has a solitary doubt in respect to the divinity of the gospel, let him not settle down with that doubt still upon his mind; but let him attentively analyze it, and trace it to its source, and not rest until he has satisfied himself whether or not it has any legitimate foundation. Or if he has been educated in a general belief of christianity, without having ever examined its evidences, let it be his first business to ascertain whether God has really spoken in that

which claims to be his word ; and this point deliberately and intelligently settled in the affirmative, he will have a shield that will be likely to repel the shafts of the skeptic and the socinian.

Let it not be supposed from our having limited our remarks hitherto to the danger of speculative infidelity in students, and the means of guarding against it, that we consider the great point gained when this evil is avoided. This indeed we consider of great moment, though if there be nothing of a more positive nature than this, that is, if the student be kept from embracing infidel sentiments and nothing more, or even if he stop at the point of an intellectual conviction of the authority and doctrines of the gospel, he may still be miserably qualified faithfully to serve his generation : he may be all this, and yet be a mere cumberer of the ground, a wretched profligate, whose presence, wherever he goes, will breed a moral pestilence. It is manifest therefore, that there should be in our institutions a system of effort which stops not in its design short of the entire renovation of the character ; of bringing every student, not only to an intelligent, but cordial belief of the truth of God. This is the great point which ought continually to be kept before the understanding, and to be pressed upon the conscience and the heart ; and any thing short of this, whatever treasures of learning or morality an individual may boast, he must still be reminded, will leave him without any certain pledge of usefulness here, and to eternal poverty and calamity hereafter.

But we hasten to the second part, of the work before us, in which our author very happily urges on students the importance of an elevated standard of christian character. This supposes that they have already made a profession of religion, or at least, hopefully entered on the christian life ; and is designed to guard them against that wretched conformity to the world, that attempt to compromise between the claims of religion and the claims of ambition or sensuality, or some or other of the forms of wordliness, to which students are, in some respects, peculiarly exposed, and which is sure to be a worm at the root of all spiritual prosperity.

The condition here supposed, belongs at this day, to a considerable proportion of the students in our colleges. There are few colleges, if any, which do not number some professors of religion ; and in some of them half the whole number of students, and in some even a greater proportion, are in the communion of the church. Many of these, we may say the great majority of them, from first to last, honor their profession and hold fast their christian integrity, and diffuse around them the light of a holy example. But it cannot be denied that there are cases of a different

sort—cases of individuals who at the beginning of their christian course were active and earnest in the cause of Christ, who have gradually fallen away, and have even given painful reason to doubt, whether they have ever known the renewing influence of the Holy Ghost. Such instances occur frequently enough to show, that any hopefully pious youth on entering college, or joining any public institution, is, in some respects, in peculiar danger of declining in the religious life. While there is the utmost reason for his aiming at high attainments in piety, there is peculiar reason to fear that he will take up with some low standard, and will actually sink far below the standard of his own selection.

One reason for such apprehension is found in the fact that he is necessarily surrounded, to considerable extent, by irreligious influences. He has indeed always been in a world lying in wickedness; and however retired may have been his situation, he has been more or less familiarized to bad example. But perhaps he has been brought comparatively little in direct contact with vice; or at any rate it has not assumed so many tempting forms; or has not pressed him so continually on every side like the atmosphere which he breathes. Now he finds himself in a community, as the case may be, in which large numbers, if not openly vicious, are at least indifferent to religion; and among these he necessarily finds to some extent his daily associates; and such is the power of example, and especially bad example, even over christians themselves, that there is great danger in such a case, of a sad declension in the spirit and practice of piety. There is danger that the young christian in these circumstances, will gradually lose the tenderness of his conscience, and in proportion as vice or error or the utter neglect of religion becomes familiar to him, that he will come to look upon them with diminished abhorrence, and before he is aware that he has begun to decline, will actually have been going far from God by a greivous backsliding.

Nor is the danger of declension in pious students to be referred to the example of the vicious and careless alone, but also to that of negligent professors. It almost always happens, that there are in every such institution, some who, though they have confessed Christ before the world, give but little evidence of being his cordial followers; whose vain conversation and trifling deportment, give the lie to their christian profession, and bring an enduring reproach on the Redeemer's cause. Now persons of this description, not only do immense harm to religion by encouraging the openly wicked, and those who neglect religion altogether, but by lessening the spirituality of many, whose light would otherwise shine more conspicuously before the world. Especially where

these loose professors happen to possess natural qualities to render them attractive, when they are amiable and intelligent and do not in any way directly oppose religion, but only profess to be a little more liberal in their notions than others, there is great danger that many will be induced by the influence of their example, to lower the standard of christian character. We have known some instances in which this remark has been most painfully exemplified, in which a gay and worldly professor has succeeded in doing that for young christians around him, which probably a hundred infidels or scoffers would have tried in vain to effect; and the reason has been, that in the one case, they were unsuspecting of evil, and dreamed not that temptation could lurk under so hallowed a guise as a christian profession; in the other, there would have been an open and day-light attack, which would have shown them at once the nature of their danger, and put them into the attitude of resistance.

There is reason still further to apprehend the evil of which we speak from the fact, that the demands which are made upon the student's time, or rather his own zeal to occupy himself exclusively in study, may leave him with too little leisure for those duties which are more immediately connected with his growth in grace. It is impossible for any christian in any circumstances to make rapid progress in religion, unless he is diligent in the use of the private means of grace; in examining his own heart, in studying and applying God's word, and in seeking daily and earnestly the influences of the Holy Spirit. In order that these means should be used to the best advantage, it is necessary that they should be used in some degree systematically;—that the christian should have his set seasons for the exercises of the closet; and that these should be sacredly maintained, so far as possible, against all intrusions. We doubt whether an individual can be found, who has made very high attainments in religion, who has suffered the duties of the closet to be at the control of passing circumstances, so that they have been performed or neglected as convenience has seemed to dictate. But if we mistake not, there is great danger that a habit of close application to study will gradually weaken the habit of a regular and devout performance of the class of duties to which we have referred. The danger is the greater because it is admitted, that a student is bound to be diligent in acquiring knowledge, and that the acquisitions which he makes have an important bearing upon his future usefulness; for in view of such an argument as this, easily might conscience withhold her upbraidings for what in other circumstances would be regarded a most culpable neglect of duty. He reasons thus with himself—“if it is true that in these intellectual acquisitions there is the germ

of any future usefulness ; if I am hereby preparing to serve God and my generation with the best effect, then surely I may be pardoned for a little remissness in those duties which lie more immediately between me and my God." Such reasoning, though the student may not suspect it, is nothing better than the sophistry of a deceitful heart. Wherever it prevails it is seen to be the harbinger of a deep and melancholy decline ; and sooner or latter the individual will find that instead of having been influenced by sober reason, he had only been playing a trick with his own conscience.

There is yet another source of danger in respect to pious students, in the fact that they are liable to come unduly under the influence of a desire of literary distinction. We do not mean to condemn a proper degree of this spirit, or to intimate that there is any inconsistency between a strong desire and persevering efforts to attain to literary excellence, and the cultivation of a high degree of spirituality. Nevertheless there is danger that this desire (innocent and even commendable as it is when kept within proper bounds,) may mount up to a spirit of unhallowed rivalry ; and the desire to excel may rather be a desire to leave others in the back ground, and to triumph in having eclipsed them, than to lay a foundation for distinguished usefulness. Where this latter kind of emulation prevails (and considering the tendencies of human nature what young man who has any self-respect is not exposed to it?) it is sure to operate unfavorably upon the growth of christian character. It is opposed to the humility, the meekness, the benevolence of the gospel. It is at war with that divine injunction, "Look not every one upon his own things, but every one also upon the things of others." And while it is itself an evil, it generates other bad affections, which mar the christian character and retard religious improvement. Many a pious student, from having neglected to watch his heart in this particular, has found himself at a great distance from the gentleness, and benignity and humility of the gospel.

We have said enough perhaps to justify the apprehension, that our religious students may find a severer ordeal in a college life, than they would be prepared to expect ; and that there is great danger that during the period of their education may be fraught with decline and injury to their christian character. This, however, is far enough from being a necessary evil ; and where it is actually experienced, it is always to be referred to that want of vigilance, of self-control and of communion with God on the part of the student, which constitute an effectual security against the beginning of evil. We will suggest a few hints to aid the christian student in holding on his way amid the temptations of a college life.

Our first suggestion is, that he should, from the beginning, have a distinct impression of his danger. Let him be apprized, that the moment he becomes connected with such a community as he must expect to find in any of our large literary institutions, he has temptations to encounter on the right hand and on the left. There is danger that his heart will be drawn away from God and from duty; that the spirit of devotion will gradually decline until his private duties become a weariness to him, if they are not entirely neglected. There is danger that the spirit of the world will creep over him, so that his spiritual comforts will die, and his example will become unedifying and injurious, and a cloud will settle over his prospects of usefulness. Let him know all this at the very commencement of his course from the lips of some judicious and experienced friend and counselor, and we may hope with good reason that it will awaken in him a spirit of active vigilance. Every condition in life has its peculiar temptations, the force of which is learned only by experience. The pious student cannot *fully* know those which await *him*, from any description he may have of them; but he may know so much as to be put upon his guard, and to be kept from falling into the path of the destroyer.

It is of great moment also that he should be deeply impressed with the consideration that the direction which his christian character assumes during the period of his education, will probably continue till the close of life. If, during this period, he maintains a deep and settled spirituality of mind, and keeps himself in subjection to God's word and an enlightened conscience, and makes it his steady aim to obey the Master whom he has professed to serve, there is the best pledge that could be obtained, that his future life will be a scene of christian self-denial, and living faith, and earnest devotedness to the Redeemer's cause. But if, on the other hand, the period of his education is marked by a grievous backsliding, by a criminal conformity to the world, by a forgetfulness or neglect of covenant vows, then it is almost equally certain that, whatever his profession may be, his subsequent life will yield but a feeble testimony to the power and excellence of the gospel. What pious youth who is reminded of this at the commencement of his education, will not be stimulated by it to vigorous efforts to keep himself unspotted from the world? If his heart glows with love to Christ, what thought is there which he cannot sooner admit than that he should live to dishonor his cause, or even to do less for its advancement than God has put within his power?

It is manifest that no student in the circumstances which we are supposing, can expect to make progress in religion without a

large share of christian decision. From the hour that he places his foot within college walls, he must be perfectly inflexible in regard to duty. He must resolve that come what will in the way of temptation, he will meet it resolutely and fearlessly, casting himself on almighty strength. He must be proof against the sneers of the scorner, and the caresses and blandishments of the gay, and the insidious wiles of the crafty, and what is perhaps worse than all, the ensnaring influence of the heartless or backslidden professor. He must determine that he will throw himself on the side of God and his truth and his cause, though he should stand alone the gazing-stock and the laughing-stock of all around him. He must have that spirit which would lead him to walk in the path of duty, though it should lead to a fiery furnace or to a lion's den; in short the great principle by which his whole conduct must be governed is, that "duties are his, consequences are the Lord's." With such a spirit exhibiting itself in perfect consistency with all that is discreet and lovely and of good report, the christian student has nothing to fear; but with a timid and compromising temper, with a disposition to go round obstacles rather than to meet them, and to make principle in a degree at least subservient to convenience, he will keep up a perpetual war with his own conscience, and will inflict wounds upon the Redeemer's cause which no subsequent efforts of his will be able to heal.

Another consideration of great importance to the pious student is, that he should faithfully and systematically observe closet duties. We have already alluded to the fact, that there is often a strong temptation to make a compromise with conscience for a cold and hurried and only occasional attendance upon these duties; but if it is true in general that just in proportion as these are neglected, the spirit of piety declines, it is eminently true as it respects students; for it is here only that they can hope to find strength to roll back from them the tide of temptation. No matter how pressing may be their studies, or how great their ambition to excel, or what inroads may be made upon their time by company, their closets *must not* be neglected; the spirit of devotion *must not* be suffered to decline; but decline it inevitably will, unless it is kept up by frequent intercourse with God. Much in this respect depends on habit. Let a student come to think it impossible, that he should be regular in his private devotions at all times, and to admit the idea that he may pass them over occasionally, and most probably he will soon find that every thing in relation to that matter is done at random; but let him take the ground at once that nothing which he can control should keep him from regularly visiting his closet, and let him adhere to that ground but a

little while, and the obstacles to his maintaining it will be effectually overcome. Nor will he be the less, but the more successful in his studies, for being faithful and constant in his devotions.

Another important help to a pious student may be found in cultivating christian intercourse with those of his own character. We fear it too often happens in our colleges, that many professors of religion have little to do with each other in-reference to the subject in which they are most of all interested; and that much of their intercourse is unworthy of the high character which they profess to sustain. Not that we wish to see them cultivating a gloomy or unsocial spirit, or assuming airs inconsistent with christian cheerfulness; but we do think that they owe it to themselves, and to the church, and to the cause of Christ, and especially to their irreligious companions around them, that their conversation be such as becometh the gospel of Christ; that they are fellow helpers together unto the kingdom of God. Let them, as they have opportunity, hold meetings for prayer and religious conference; for imparting mutual strength for the duties and trials to which they are daily called; and let them also in their more private intercourse, in the occasional meetings of two or three friends, endeavor to help each other forward in the christian life. Thus in their daily communion will they be a blessing to each other, and a blessing to all who contemplate their example. Their own souls will be quickened and comforted, and the savor of their piety will diffuse itself all around them.

There is yet another way, and it is the last to which we shall advert, in which religious students may keep themselves from evil, and advance their own sanctification—we refer to their direct efforts for helping forward the cause of religion in the institution with which they are connected; and especially in endeavoring to impress their thoughtless associates with the importance of securing the interests of their souls. We are aware that this duty of speaking to the impenitent in any circumstances, requires discretion; but in the case supposed, where the person speaking is a companion of the person spoken to, and he who is addressed has perhaps no ear and no heart for serious things, the utmost prudence is necessary in order to accomplish, or even not utterly to defeat, the desired object. Every thing of a dictatorial, or forbidding, or assuming nature should be carefully avoided; and the spirit of kindness and love should breathe in the language and speak in the countenance; and the impression should be made, if possible, that the admonition is dictated by nothing but the sincerest friendship. Where this is done, there is good reason to expect a happy result. But where an individual fails of this.

he may talk, but probably it will be worse than beating the air. Let a religious student cultivate an habitual interest in the spiritual welfare of those around him, and let him, without being officious or obtrusive, manifest that interest, by a course of judicious and affectionate and persevering effort to save souls from death, and it cannot but be that he will find his own heart the fruitful soil of good affections and lofty christian purposes; and he will be going rapidly forward to the fulness of the stature of a perfect person in Christ.

In view of the subject which has been before us in this article, what christian is there but will prize more highly, and acknowledge more perfectly, and supplicate more earnestly, those richest of all blessings—revivals of religion? Blessed be God, these visitations of mercy have already been richly experienced in many of our seminaries of learning; they have purified the moral atmosphere which prevails there; and the church has lifted her voice in a thousand songs of gratitude and triumph, that so much talent and learning have already been consecrated by revivals, in those institutions, to the Redeemer's cause. What has been already, we fully believe will be hereafter, and in a still higher degree. We confidently anticipate in reliance on God's grace, that through the influence of revivals, our literary institutions are to become more and more the nurseries of the church; that infidelity, and profligacy, and all open irreligion will ere long be compelled to seek some other retreat; that the bible standard of christian character, and no other, will prevail; and that every college and academy in our land, will be brought under the hallowed and sanctifying influences of the gospel. How long a period may elapse before this blessed consummation, we pretend not to decide; but surely we have a right to expect it sooner or later; we ought to expect it; and it should animate our prayers, and quicken our efforts, for its speedy arrival.

But we ought not to close our remarks without reverting to the excellent work which has suggested them. It is written with much perspicuity and force, and is evidently the product of a highly disciplined and cultivated mind. The style is rather bold and strong than flowing, but still possesses much of that kind of attraction which is desirable, considering the class of persons to whom the work is addressed. We confess we have been so much interested in it, that we feel half disposed, on finding ourselves at the end to quarrel with our author, that he had not kept us longer; and we would seriously suggest to him, whether if the book passes into other editions, (as we think it deserves to do,) he may not advantageously increase its interest by increasing its size. We perceive that it has been re-printed in

England, and spoken of with much favor by some of their periodicals. May its benign effects be felt on both sides of the water, and the excellent lessons it conveys, help to form and elevate the character of every coming generation.

ART. VI.—DR. TYLER'S REMARKS AND DR. TAYLOR'S REPLY.

Remarks on Dr. Taylor's Letter to Dr. Hawes. BY BENNET TYLER, D. D.
Reply to Dr. Tyler's Remarks. BY NATHANIEL W. TAYLOR, D. D.

WE are glad to see, that the question between Dr. Taylor and those of his brethren who differ from him, is beginning to be placed on its true ground. Their real differences relate, not to those great fundamental facts, or *doctrines* which constitute New-England calvinism; but to certain *theories* and philosophical explanations, by which those doctrines are defended, and reconciled with other acknowledged truths. Accordingly Dr. Tyler says, "to the eleven articles of Dr. Taylor's creed, I do not object." "I have no doubt he *really* believes the doctrines stated in his creed." Among these doctrines, we find the following, viz. that of the trinity—the eternal decrees of God, extending to all actual events, sin not excepted—the entire depravity of mankind by nature, as the consequence of Adam's first sin—the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ—the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit—the eternal election of those who are renewed unto salvation—and the final perseverance of all the elect. These doctrines, beyond all question, constitute the calvinistic system; and as Dr. Taylor is acknowledged sincerely to maintain them all, he is of course fully acquitted by Dr. Tyler of any departure from the received faith of the New-England churches.

In connection with these doctrines, however, Dr. Tyler adopts certain philosophical theories, which he regards as absolutely essential to a consistent belief in the doctrines themselves. Some of these theories Dr. Taylor rejects, and proposes other solutions of the facts, which are better adapted, in his view, to support the calvinistic system, in which both parties confessedly agree. Here then is the exact point of difference between these two brethren; and it is avowedly on this ground, that Dr. Tyler comes forward to accuse one whom he admits to be sound in the faith, of entering on "a gradual undermining process" to destroy the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. Now we are not greatly surprised, when we look back on the progress of theological discussion in our country, to find that Dr. Tyler has so intermingled his philosophy with his theology—has so identified his theories with his doctrines—as to believe sincerely, that no man can consistently re-

ject the one and yet maintain the other. How often have New-England men been told by their southern brethren, that in receding from the old ground of the imputation of Adam's sin, they must abandon the doctrine of man's entire sinfulness by nature—that in rejecting the scheme of limited atonement, they would inevitably be led on step by step, into open universalism—that in asserting man's ability to repent and embrace the gospel, they were opening upon the church the floodgates of Pelagian error! All this has been honestly said and honestly believed by a multitude of good men, "who verily thought they ought to do many things" against their New-England brethren in the Presbyterian church, quietly laboring as they were, and with great and acknowledged success, to build up the Redeemer's kingdom. Dr. Tyler, we doubt not, has sympathized deeply with many of his brethren under these trying circumstances; and has felt how cruel and unjust it was, to blast the character and destroy the influence of a minister of the gospel, by throwing over him a cloud of *anticipated heresy*. He has seen too as the result of more than thirty years of observation, that none of these threatened defections from the faith, have actually taken place; and has rejoiced in spirit with many of his brethren, as he saw them gradually relieved from the load of obloquy which had borne them down, and rising to the first stations of influence and usefulness in the church.

While we do not wonder, then, that Dr. Tyler, like too many excellent men among us, has identified his theories with the doctrines which they are intended to support, we are surprized that he should so entirely forget the lessons taught us by the experience of the last thirty years, as to charge a man whom he acknowledges to be sound in the faith, with being engaged in "a gradual undermining process" to destroy the doctrines of the gospel, simply on the ground of a difference in philosophical theories. Dr. Taylor's views, it is well known, are of no recent date. During his labors of twenty years as a minister of the gospel, and ten years as a teacher of theology, these views, according to Dr. Tyler's own confession, have not led him to abandon the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. Nearly one hundred young men have been educated for the ministry under his direction. If the alledged tendency of these views to produce a defection from the faith, had any foundation in fact, surely there could be found in this number, some individual who has renounced the great principles of orthodoxy. Not a solitary instance of this kind, however, does Dr. Tyler bring forward; nor do we believe a man can be found who has passed through the regular course of instruction in the theological department of Yale College, who would not give his hearty assent to all the doctrines—confessedly those of the calvinistic

system—which Dr. Taylor has embodied in his creed. Of what weight are the most-confident predictions of future heresy, against these plain and unequivocal facts?

But it may be said, Dr. Tyler has pointed out several contradictions between the creed and the theories of Dr. Taylor. On this point we would refer our readers to Dr. Taylor's Reply. It is there shown, that these apparent contradictions are all made out, by imputing to Dr. Taylor opinions which he never held, but on the contrary has unequivocally disclaimed. As most of our readers undoubtedly will examine this Reply for themselves, we shall not dwell on this topic. We shall only say, that knowing the candor and integrity of Dr. Tyler, we are certain he will be among the first to acknowledge and regret the errors, into which he has fallen.

As Dr. Tyler has chosen to implicate the Christian Spectator in the same condemnation with Dr. Taylor, we think it proper, without going over the ground taken in the "Reply" of the latter, to present the subject in another light, by exhibiting some of the reasons which have induced us to reject Dr. Tyler's two principal theories, as exhibited in his Remarks. Our object is to show, that these theories are encumbered with difficulties of such a nature, that they must be set aside as false, whatever else is admitted to be true. The two theories which we shall notice, relate to the Depravity of man, and the Divine permission of sin.

I. DR. TYLER'S THEORY RESPECTING HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

This theory is, 'that *the nature* of man since the apostacy, differs as really from his *nature* before that event, as the nature of a lion which leads him to feed on flesh, differs from that of the ox, which leads him to feed on grass.' Accordingly he asks, "what inconsistency is there, in supposing that there is in man, *a native propensity to evil, propagated* from parent to child, like other natural propensities?" By the "nature" of man, Dr. Tyler must here mean the *constitution of his being*, for it is in this sense that the lion differs from the ox. When he speaks of the supposed propensity to evil as *propagated*, and compares it to those qualities which "run in the blood," and are transmitted "constitutionally," he shows too clearly to be misunderstood, that it is the very constitution of the mind itself, which he considers as depraved. On this theory then we would offer the following remarks.

1. It exhibits God, as the responsible author of sin. We suppose Dr. Tyler to believe, as others who have advanced the same theory maintain, that this propensity to sin, is *itself sinful*; or as another writer affirms, "is the essence of all sin." Now who will deny, that God is the responsible author

of that which he produces, whether by direct creation, or by the physical laws of propagation? In either case, there is the same unqualified purpose to produce it on the part of God, and the same *natural* impossibility to avoid it on the part of man. God therefore, according to this theory, is the responsible author of that in man, in which the essence of all sin consists; and actually damns the soul for being what He makes it, or causes it to be by physical laws.

If Dr. Tyler should say, that the propensity to sin, of which he speaks, is *innocent*, still man as he comes into being, is doomed to sin by a natural and fatal necessity;—he is led to disobey rather than obey God, by the same cause, or the operation of the same physical law of his being, as that by which a lion is led to feed on flesh and not on grass. If this latter act were sinful, which would be responsible for the fact, the lion or his Maker?

2. This theory accounts for *all* sin in men, by asserting a *previous* sin as its cause. It considers the existence of a propagated propensity to sin, as “the *cause* or *reason*, why all men become *sinners*.” If then a propensity to sin, is sinful, we have *one* sin at least in men before they “become sinners;” for this propensity is the *cause* or *reason* of their becoming sinners; i. e. there is *one* sin, before *all* sin—even *the essence of all sin*, before all sin, as its cause!

3. This theory is inconsistent with the doctrine of *natural ability*, and of course with the moral agency of man. According to Dr. Tyler, man *cannot* sin without a constitutional propensity to sin as its cause; but he certainly cannot in any sense *avoid* sinning, if he has such a propensity. With such a propensity, man has not a natural ability to avoid sin. This is alike true, whether this propensity be supposed to be *sinful* or *innocent*. If *sinful* in itself, then as resulting from the physical laws of propagation, man *cannot in any sense*, avoid being a sinner. If *innocent*, still it leads to sin as the only possible result, by the same laws by which the lion is led to feed on flesh and not on grass. Man therefore by the laws of propagation, is *naturally unable*, to avoid sin and to become holy, and therefore is not a moral agent. Of course

4. This theory subverts the doctrine of *moral inability*. As this doctrine has been taught by orthodox divines, the sole obstacle in the way of the sinner’s conversion, is *his own free voluntary perverseness in sin*. But according to Dr. Tyler, a *propagated constitutional propensity to sin*, is the true *cause* of continued sin, and the *real obstacle* to the sinner’s conversion. Of course, the sinner’s *inability* to repent and turn to God is *not a moral inability*. He is *constitutionally* disqualified,—naturally

unable, to renounce sin for the service of his Maker. Thus the very distinction between *natural* and *moral* inability, which the orthodox clergy of New England, have with one voice, pronounced the basis of the sinner's obligation, is according to this theory entirely subverted. The work of the Spirit does not consist in making the sinner *willing* to serve God, but in changing his constitutional propensities.

5. That man may be an accountable being, according to Dr. Tyler's principles, he must be a *saint*, that is, partly holy and partly sinful. Man cannot be accountable without natural ability to put forth holy, as well as sinful acts. But, if as Dr. Tyler maintains, a previous propensity to sinful actions is necessary to the existence of such actions, then a previous propensity to holy actions is also necessary to their existence. Both propensities therefore are necessary to a *natural ability* for moral exercises, and of course to moral accountability. But with both these propensities, man, Dr. Tyler will acknowledge, must be partly holy and partly sinful; that is, he must be a saint. If therefore man is an accountable being, he is, by birth and propagation, not a totally depraved sinner, but a *saint*.

6. This theory subverts the doctrine of Edwards, '*that the will is as the greatest apparent good*,' in the objects of choice or preference. Dr. Tyler condemns the Christian Spectator for maintaining that sin arises from our choosing the good presented by the objects of temptation, to the various natural appetites. "The universal sinfulness of mankind," he contends, "is not to be attributed," on this scheme, "to their nature as its cause, but to the circumstances of temptation in which they are placed." He has therefore devised the theory of a propagated propensity to *sin itself*—a propensity totally unique in kind, which finds its end or object, not in the good presented in the things around us, but solely in *the act of transgression*. If then man loves the world or any other object more than God, and chooses it as his portion, he loves or chooses it, not for any good to be derived from the *object* of affection or choice, but *solely* because he has a propagated propensity to that particular state of mind called sin. Thus, man does not choose or love an object supremely, in view of any good, either real or apparent in *the object* of affection or choice, but he loves *purely* for the sake of *loving*, and chooses *purely* for the sake of *choosing*!

7. According to Dr. Tyler's theory, sin must be *good in itself*, and the only *real* good to man as a moral being. The ultimate object, and the only object of this 'propagated constitutional propensity to sin,' is sin itself. But we know, that the ultimate object of every constitutional propensity in man, is some

gratification, pleasure or enjoyment. This is implied in the very nature of a constitutional propensity, since otherwise it would be a propensity to nothing. Of course, sin *in itself*, must be pleasure or enjoyment to the mind, i. e. *good in itself*. According to the same philosophical principle, holiness cannot be good in itself to man, without a propensity to holiness. But none will pretend, that man has a propagated propensity to holiness. Sin therefore, to man considered as a *moral being*, and as he is constituted by his Maker, is the *only real* good to man.

8. According to Dr. Tyler's philosophy, man in the *act* of becoming holy, must be *supremely selfish*. He cannot, if Dr. Tyler's principles are correct, become holy, without some change in the *nature*, or constitution of his soul—he cannot without a propensity to holiness. Of course, according to Dr. Tyler, when man becomes *holy*, he does so, to gratify a new created constitutional propensity to holiness; i. e. for the pleasure, or happiness there is in being holy. But Dr. Tyler maintains that “every moral being; destitute of benevolence, and actuated by self-love, (or a regard to happiness) is *necessarily* a *selfish* being.” *Strictures*, p. 22. Man therefore in the act of becoming holy is necessarily a *selfish being*.

9. Dr. Tyler's theory is inconsistent with undeniable facts. Adam and Satan* with his companions, all sinned. Whence came their first propensity to sin? Whatever expedient Dr. Tyler may devise to account for the first propensity to sin in these creatures of God, one thing is certain, viz. that being without father and without mother, they did not become the subjects of such a propensity ‘by propagation.’

10. According to Dr. Tyler's theory, the divine Lawgiver seems to have entirely mistaken, in regard to man, the proper object of legal prohibition and penalty. The *radical evil* in this case on Dr. Tyler's theory, is not that men *do* wrong, or *act* wrong, with power to do right; for like the lion and the ox, they only act out *the nature* which God has given them. But the *radical evil*, lies in the constitutional propensities, which God has given to men. The divine law therefore, it would seem, should forbid men to have, and punish them for having, those constitutional propensities, which they derived exclusively from their Creator. The divine Lawgiver therefore, in making *moral action*, or what men *do*, the object of legal prohibition and penalty, seems to have entirely mistaken the proper object of law in respect to men.

11. The terms of salvation, and the exhibition of motives to comply with them, are, according to the same theory, a delusive mockery. These all imply that the reason why men are not

saved, is that they do not *act*—that they do not repent, believe, and love. But on this theory, it might as well be said, that such is the reason, why the beasts of the field are not prepared for heaven, for these are no more destitute of the requisite capacity for such action, according to Dr. Tyler's theory, than men are. The true and only reason, according to this scheme, why sinners are lost, is not that *they* do not act, but that *God* does not; it is not that *they* do not repent, believe and love, but that God does not change their constitutional propensities. The motives of the gospel, might with the same propriety be addressed to animals as to men; and under the summons of God to immediate repentance, the only rational course for a man to pursue, is to wait for his Maker to give him a new constitutional propensity.

12. According to Dr. Tyler's theory, what is commonly called *Regeneration* by the Holy Spirit, is unnecessary. This change according to sound orthodoxy, is confessedly a moral change, consisting in a new *voluntary* affection of the heart. But the change and the only change in man, which requires a divine interposition, according to Dr. Tyler's theory, is a *constitutional* change—a change in the *very nature* of the mind—a change in its propagated propensities. Let the Divine Spirit effect this change—let creative power take away one constitutional propensity and give another, and the work is done. A propensity to holiness will as infallibly flow out in holy action, as a propensity to sin, in sinful action. Let this change in the constitutional properties of the soul be effected, and man without any further influence from the Spirit of God, not only *can* change, but he cannot *help* changing, his own heart.

13. Dr. Tyler's theory supports the Arminian doctrine, of the necessity of grace to restore moral agency to man. His theory implies, that the nature of man was so changed by the fall of Adam, as to involve the absolute loss of *natural ability* to obey God. This, we have already shown. But if God, in such a case, requires any duty of man, he is bound in justice (grace, Arminians call it) to *enable* man to fulfil the requirement by the assistance or power of his Holy Spirit. If the loss consists in want of intellect, or the power of choice, or capacity to be influenced by the motives to obedience, that loss must be supplied, or the demands of the law and gospel are unjust.

14. Dr. Tyler's theory supports the Arminian doctrine of the self-determining power of the will. In every act of preference or choice, we choose the object of some constitutional propensity. This is implied even in Dr. Tyler's theory, since otherwise a constitutional propensity to sin, would not be necessary to account for sin. But *the* object of a constitutional propensity to sin, is *sin* itself. Now *sin* itself as distinguished from a *constitutional propensity* to

sin, must be a sinful preference, choice, or volition. It follows therefore, that when we choose sinfully, we choose a sinful choice ;— i. e. we choose a choice, or will to will.—Farther: according to Dr. Tyler, sin or a sinful choice cannot be accounted for, without supposing a constitutional propensity to this choice. But this choice, as we have seen, cannot take place without being chosen by a previous choice, and hence this previous choice must be in the same predicament. There must be a propensity to that, and a previous choice of it, and so on *ad infinitum*. Dr. Tyler's theory therefore involves the Arminian doctrine of the self-determining power of the will, with its *ad infinitum* absurdity.

15. To sin, according to Dr. Tyler, must be the chief end of man. If the theory of propagated sin is true, man has no propensity towards the objects of right affection or choice. He has not what Edwards considers as essential to a moral agent, viz. 'a capacity of being influenced by the motives to right action.' In respect to any capacity of happiness from the objects of right affection, man as he is constituted by his Maker, is like a stone or a corpse. He is therefore, considered as a moral being, capable of deriving happiness *only* from sinning. His very nature,—'the properties of the mind which are propagated like those of the body,' must be transformed by creative power, or man can derive no happiness from the service of his Maker. As the lion must eat flesh, and the ox grass, to answer the end of their being; so man to be supremely happy, or to attain the highest happiness of which his nature is capable, must sin. Sin is not only *good in itself*, and the only good to man, but according to Dr. Tyler, it is also the necessary means of the greatest good. To sin therefore, is obviously and undeniably, the very end of man's creation—the highest end of his being—the chief end of man. Man's chief end is *not* to glorify God, and enjoy him forever; and the Westminster catechism is flatly contradicted.

Such are some of the reasons which have led us, in common with President Edwards, to reject the theory, that there is in man a *specific* propensity to sin, distinct from the natural appetites implanted in our race at the first creation. As that great writer has justly remarked, this theory is in no degree necessary to account for the existing phenomena; while it is fraught with consequences equally dishonorable to God, and subversive of the great principles of moral agency.* It is a revealed fact, that eve-

* "In order to account for a sinful corruption of nature, yea, a total native depravity of the heart of man, there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality *infused, implanted, or wrought* into the nature of man, by any *positive* cause or influence whatsoever, either from God, or the creature; or of supposing that man is conceived and born with a *fountain of evil* in his heart, such as is any thing properly *positive*. I think a little attention to the nature of things will

ry individual of our race, sins, and as to *moral* conduct does nothing but sin, from the commencement of his moral being, until he is renewed by the Spirit of God. If this fact be referred, not to variable circumstances, such as example, education, etc. but to the permanent principles of our nature, under *all* the appropriate circumstances of our being, then are we truly said to be *by nature* sinners, without making it necessary to suppose, that the *constitution* of the mind is itself sinful.

There is, however, a sense of the term *nature*, which has sometimes given rise, we believe, to a confusion of ideas on this subject. When we are told, that by the promises of the gospel, we may be "made partakers of the divine *nature*," the term is obviously used, to denote, not the *constitution* of the divine mind, for of this we can never partake, but the *governing purpose* or *controlling affection* of that Being, whose character an apostle has described by the word LOVE. In this sense of the term, it is correct to say, that a renewed man has a holy nature, and an unrenewed man a corrupt or depraved nature. As it is a hereditary fact, that every descendant of Adam in the long line of generations, is the subject of this depraved governing purpose, or controlling affection, it might be said in *this* sense of the term, that we inherit from our first parent, "a corrupt nature," and are the subjects of a "hereditary depravity." Such language however would be liable to be misunderstood, and for this reason we should not use it. But this is not the sense in which the term *nature* is used by Dr. Tyler, and those who adopt his theory as given above. He is endeavoring to *account* for the existence of this depraved purpose in our race; and he does it by tracing back this purpose to a "propagated" propensity to sin, existing as he tells us "constitutionally," and resembling other propensities which "run in the blood." All this shows, that the term "*nature*," and "*native*," as he employs them, are used in their primary sense, to denote the *constitution* of the human mind itself. And while we would not intimate, that Dr. Tyler really embraces the conclusions which we have deduced from his theory; we ask whether he ought not to do so, to be consistent with himself?

be sufficient to satisfy any impartial considerate inquirer, that the absence of positive good principles, and so the withholding of a special divine influence to impart and maintain those good principles—leaving the common natural principles of self-love, natural appetite, &c. to themselves, without the government of superior divine principles—will certainly be followed with the corruption; yea, the total corruption of the heart, without occasion for any positive influence at all: And that it was thus in fact that corruption of nature came on Adam, immediately on his fall, and comes on all his posterity, as sinning in him, and falling with him."—*Edwards' Works*, vol. ii. pp. 532—3.

We now proceed to consider,

II. DR. TYLER'S THEORY RESPECTING THE DIVINE PERMISSION OF SIN.

In doing this however, we shall not confine our remarks merely to the statements of Dr. Tyler. Our readers are aware, that the doctrine, *that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good*, is maintained by all Supralapsarian Calvinists, and especially by those, who in this country, are called High Hopkinsians. Instead therefore of confining our subsequent remarks merely to the statements of Dr. Tyler, our object is to develop to some extent, the incongruities of the Supralapsarian scheme of doctrine. When therefore we speak of the theory or scheme of Dr. Tyler, we intend the theory, or scheme which involves the theory, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good ; of which Dr. Tyler is the advocate.

We shall attempt to show,

In the first place, that the absurdities and contradictions which Dr. Tyler has charged on the theory and creed of his opponent, pertain exclusively to his own.

According to the scheme maintained by Dr. Tyler, ' God, *all things* considered, prefers sin to holiness in every instance in which the former takes place ; and at the same time prefers holiness *in itself* considered, to sin.' But we know, if indeed we know any thing, that when the mind is under the necessity of preferring or choosing *one* of two objects, it cannot prefer or choose *both* of them. If it could, which would be taken ? From the necessity of the case therefore, if one is preferred to the other, that other is not preferred at all ; and to say, that any being prefers or chooses *one*, is in all usage equivalent to saying that he does *not* prefer the other. To maintain therefore as Dr. Tyler does, that God prefers holiness to sin, is maintaining that he does *not* prefer sin to holiness. But Dr. Tyler also maintains, that God does prefer sin to holiness. Of course he maintains, that God does *not* prefer sin to holiness, and also, that he *does* prefer sin to holiness ; which is " a palpable contradiction."

Dr. Tyler will doubtless admit the following principle as stated by President Edwards,—“ that the choice of the mind *never* departs from that which at the time appears most agreeable, all things considered.” But Dr. Tyler maintains, that God prefers holiness *in itself* considered, to sin ; and also prefers sin to holiness, *all things considered*. Of course, if he adopts the above principle of Edwards, in common with calvinists generally, he maintains, that the mind of God *does* depart and does *not* depart in its choice, from that which at the time appears most agreeable all things considered.—Or thus : The preferences of

God being always conformed to truth, he always prefers the greater good to the less, and never prefers the less to the greater. If then, as Dr. Tyler maintains, God really prefers holiness to sin, be the reason of this preference what it may, holiness is in truth the greater good. If the reason of the preference be, that holiness is *good in itself*, then this is the fact which constitutes it the greater good—the stronger motive; and of course precludes the preference of sin to holiness. To suppose otherwise, is to suppose, that God chooses contrary to the stronger motive, or that he prefers the less to the greater good.—The same thing is true, when an object is preferred or chosen, *all* things considered. There is that, in view of the mind, which is the stronger motive, and which can result in only one preference or choice. To suppose otherwise in respect to God, is to suppose both the stronger and the weaker motive to prevail. If therefore as Dr. Tyler maintains, God actually *prefers* holiness in itself considered to sin, and *also* prefers sin to holiness all things considered, then he prefers the less to the greater good, and the greater to the less, which is “a palpable contradiction.”

We shall have occasion hereafter to trace this error of Dr. Tyler and others to its true source.

The theory of Dr. Tyler subverts *the doctrine of decrees*; or the doctrine, that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass. Dr. Tyler maintains that God prefers holiness in itself considered to sin; and that this is as real a preference of the divine mind as any other. But if God really prefers holiness to sin, then holiness is the greater good. He can therefore have *no* preference of sin to holiness, unless he can prefer the less to the greater good; which Dr. Tyler will admit to be impossible.—Or thus; God can have *no* preference of sin to holiness, because sin according to the scheme of Dr. Tyler is ‘in *no* respect good,’ but is ‘*wholly* an evil.’—But surely God cannot foreordain that for which he has *no* preference. Of course God cannot foreordain sin, and therefore cannot foreordain whatsoever comes to pass.

Again; If the existence of universal holiness is not the necessary means of the greatest conceivable good, God would not require it in his perfect law. What is the law of God, if he does not require that kind of moral action which is the necessary means of the greatest good? Are not his subjects bound *to believe*, that he does require the best kind of moral action? And is that *true*, which they are bound to believe, or does the divine Lawgiver deceive them? Universal holiness then, as God is true, is the best kind of moral action and the necessary means of the greatest good, and sin is not. But says Dr. Tyler, “If it cannot be proved, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest

good, it cannot in my opinion be proved, that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." But it cannot be proved, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, unless it can be proved that the divine Lawgiver is a deceiver. Of course, according to Dr. Tyler, it cannot be proved, that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

While these contradictions pertain to the theory and creed maintained by Dr. Tyler, it is easy to see that they do not pertain to those of his opponent. Dr. Tyler's scheme involves the contradiction of two opposite preferences of the *same* objects, viz. holiness and sin; and makes it impossible to maintain the doctrine of decrees without such contradiction. But the contradiction vanishes if we suppose, that the two preferences of God do not respect the same, but entirely *diverse* objects. This is the peculiarity of Dr. Taylor's system. To exhibit the objects of preference as thus diverse, he suggests, as the *possible* alternative presented to the divine mind, the existence of sin on the one hand, and on the other the non-existence of the best system. God, according to this hypothesis, adopted the best moral system, preferring that every subject should obey rather than disobey his law; and yet knowing that sin would exist under this system, he preferred its existence rather than not to adopt the system. Between two preferences of objects thus diverse, there is no shadow of contradiction. It is simply, as he says, a case of preferring A to B, and also of preferring B to C. Just so, Dr. Tyler, prefers that all his people should accept rather than reject the offers of the gospel, and still knowing or believing that some will reject those offers, prefers that they should do so, rather than not preach to them the gospel. Every wise human legislator prefers obedience to the laws against theft and murder, to the disobedience of any subject; and yet he prefers transgression in some instances, rather than not enact those laws as the means of public safety. The contradiction, then, which encumbers Dr. Tyler's theory, has no place if we suppose that any possible alternative can exist, besides that of God's choosing holiness and also rejecting it—choosing sin and also rejecting that. Dr. Taylor, in suggesting such an alternative, does it (as he expressly states) not in the light of *actual* but *possible* truth—as a representative (like the unknown quantity in algebra) of that which shall turn out to be the *real* object rejected by God, when he chose or decreed the existence of sin. Some such *possible* object, it was necessary to suppose, as a "point of rest" for the mind in considering the question. It remains, then, for Dr. Tyler to prove, that no such object can exist. It is not sufficient for him to cavil at the one suggested as possible, by Dr Taylor. He must, if he would maintain his the-

ory, prove that there *cannot* be any such diverse object—that we are shut up by the nature of the case, in asserting the doctrine of decrees, to this palpable contradiction, that God has two directly opposite preferences respecting the same identical objects. Thus we see that the inconsistency which he charges upon his opponent, belongs exclusively to his own scheme; and that this charge was founded on the assumption that Dr. Taylor like himself, considered the objects chosen and rejected as the very same, when in fact they were expressly stated to be entirely diverse.

2. The scheme of Dr. Tyler is inconsistent with the scriptures.

According to Dr. Tyler, 'God, all things considered, prefers sin to holiness, in every instance in which the former takes place.' Now we maintain that this position is expressly contradicted by *the divine law*. If any truth can be ascertained with infallible certainty, through the medium of human language, it is that which God expresses in his law. The means of deciding beyond all mistake the import of this law, must exist; and a man of good common sense, must be as truly able to arrive at an infallible decision respecting it, as the most accomplished theologian or critic.

We say then, that the truth which God expresses in his law, is *that of his UNQUALIFIED PREFERENCE of holiness to sin; or of his preference of holiness to sin, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED*. Here we appeal to usage, as the true and infallible criterion of the import of language. In all cases among men, law is confessedly an expression of the lawgiver's unqualified preference of obedience to disobedience. What would be the law of parental or civil authority, if subjects were allowed to qualify it, as Dr. Tyler qualifies the law of God? Suppose them to insist, 'that the law of the parent or of the magistrate is *not* an expression of his unqualified preference of obedience to disobedience,—that notwithstanding the absolute language of the law, he does actually prefer disobedience to obedience all things considered,—especially as he might prevent our transgression if he would, it is placed beyond all doubt, that he is on the whole better pleased with it, than with obedience in its stead.' What, we say, if law may be thus interpreted, what is it but a burlesque and a mockery on all legislation? Who does not know, that thus to interpret law, is in the last degree unauthorized and preposterous, and, in homely phrase, giving the lie to the lawgiver himself? Dr. Tyler will freely admit, that all that can be called law among men, is an expression of the lawgiver's unqualified preference of obedience to disobedience. But if this is so in all other instances, why is it not so in the present instance? How can we ascertain the import of language as used

by God in his revelation to man, unless we assume as an infallible principle, that he uses it as men use it? If this is not a true principle of interpretation, there is none. If it is not a safe and sure principle, the bible is a sealed book. Here then we plant our feet, and we set at defiance all abstract reasoning on the subject. We ask for *the import* of the law of God; and we ask for it, according to the true mode of interpreting the law. The mode introduced by the theory of Dr. Tyler must be false,—a flagrant violation of every just principle of interpretation. The far-fetched philosophy of metaphysical divines devised it. No law, human or divine, ever failed both in words and import, to express the lawgiver's UNQUALIFIED PREFERENCE of obedience to disobedience. According then, to the true *usus loquendi*, the sole and infallible umpire of the question, God in his law unequivocally declares his preference of holiness to sin ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. But the theory in question denies that God has such a preference. What, therefore, God asserts, that theory denies.

On this point we next appeal to Ezek. xxxiii. 10, and xviii. 23; 2 Pet. iii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 4. To ascertain the import of one of these declarations, is to ascertain the import of them all. The passages in Ezekiel read thus: "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, turn ye," etc. "Have I any pleasure *at all*, that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live?" Now the question is, how is it that a God of sincerity and truth, can use language as men use it, (and if he does not, he uses it in vain,) and solemnly affirm that he has 'NO PLEASURE'—NO PLEASURE AT ALL, in the death of the wicked, but that he turn and live, when the actual fact is, according to Dr. Tyler, that he has on the whole, *more* pleasure in their impenitence and perdition than in their return to duty and to life? What are the objects compared? Sin and death on the one hand, and repentance and life on the other. The declaration then is unambiguous and absolute, that God has no preference, no pleasure at all in the former when *compared* with the latter.* If Dr. Tyler should say, that "no pleasure,"—"no pleasure at all"—means no pleasure in sin in itself considered, let him prove his assertion, and show the possibility of two opposite preferences of the *same* objects. Let him at least, appeal to some authorized usage, to show that either God

* He might prefer and so decree, the existence of their sin rather than the non-existence of the best possible system. But can he prefer or have pleasure in their sin rather than their repentance and holiness? Let the prophet decide. We hope our readers will keep constantly in view this distinction, as to the *objects* presented to the divine choice on Dr. Tyler's scheme and on ours.

or man ever used such unqualified language in such a qualified import. We ask then for some good and sufficient reason for supposing, that when God says he has *no pleasure at all* in the sin and death of the wicked, when compared with their repentance and life, the fact after all is, that he has on the whole *the greatest pleasure* in the former.

The question here may be tested in another manner. This solemn declaration of God was made in reply to the following objection. "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how shall we then live?" Here a purpose or decree is ascribed by these cavilers to God, and an inference drawn. The purpose charged on God, is a purpose that they should go on in sin and die, rather than *turn and live*. The inference is, that their case was hopeless, and that God was insincere in his offers of mercy. Three things show, that we have stated their charge correctly,—that the very essence of it consisted in imputing to God a preference of their continued sin, *as compared* with their return to him by repentance and holiness. 1st. Had they simply charged him with purposing that the lost should go on in sin and die, this was true, and God could not have denied it without denying the doctrine of decrees. 2dly. They could never have charged him with insincerity in calling upon them to turn and live, except by assuming that he preferred their continued sin to their repentance. 3d. God in repelling the charge, meets it directly as being of the nature which we have described, a charge of His preferring their continued sin to holiness in its stead. What then is His answer? "Say unto them, as I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Thus God, instead of admitting the reality of the purpose charged, (and for which Dr. Tyler contends,) and then showing that the inference does not follow; disclaims *that very purpose*. This he does in the most explicit manner, by declaring that he has no pleasure that they should sin and die, rather than repent and live, but directly the contrary. These cavilers therefore based their objection on the self-same doctrine which is taught by Dr. Tyler, viz. that God prefers sin to holiness; and God under the solemnity of an oath, denies the truth of the doctrine.

In confirmation of this view of the text, we ask, how the above objection is answered according to Dr. Tyler's theory of two opposite wills. The objection, Dr. Tyler will admit, is founded on the fact, that God, all things considered, purposes the sin and death of the wicked, rather than *their repentance* and life. According to Dr. Tyler then, God does not answer the objection by

denying the reality of such a purpose ; but by simply asserting, that he prefers their repentance *in itself considered*, to their continued sin. And yet according to Dr. Tyler, God has revealed the fact, that in many cases, he *on the whole*, or *all things considered*, prefers their continued sin to their repentance, and that his providential arrangements are designed to secure and will actually secure, the execution of this purpose. Is this answering the objection, and proving God's sincerity? If Dr. Tyler should invite a friend to share in his hospitality, and then explain himself to mean, that he only prefers the acceptance of his invitation *in itself considered* to its rejection, but that *on the whole* or *all things considered*, he prefers the contrary, and declares that he had made such arrangements as would secure the refusal of the invitation, who would or could believe in his sincerity. Who, if Dr. Tyler had power to do all his pleasure, would not despair of partaking of his hospitality? Such, according to this theory, is all the vindication, which God offers of his sincerity! The supposition is incredible. The conclusion then is undeniable, that God by his prophet, solemnly and in the most pointed terms, denies the very doctrine, which Dr. Tyler maintains.

Again ; We refer to James i. 13. "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."—It will be conceded, that the word *tempt*, in the phrase "neither tempteth he any man," is used in a bad sense. But to *tempt*, in this sense of the word, is to do those things which are fitted and designed to secure wrong moral action, rather than right. Now in this, the true and only possible sense of the word in this connection, the Apostle declares that *God does not tempt any man*. But according to the scheme of Dr. Tyler, God on the whole not only designs or purposes wrong moral action, rather than right in every man, but adopts exactly those providential measures and influences which are fitted to secure it. To make the result sure, he even brings every human being into existence with a constitutional propensity to sin. We ask in what worse sense, one man ever tempts his fellow men to sin? Not that he tempts them to commit sin for its own sake or in itself considered, any more than God does : the tempter of others, always finds his motive, in some personal advantage to be gained by leading them into sin. Besides as we have shown, if God, as Dr. Tyler maintains, on the whole prefers sin to holiness, he has no other purpose or design in leading men into sin, than the single purpose, to secure their sin rather than their holiness. This must be so, if God prefers their sin as the necessary means of the greatest good, for to suppose him to have any other purpose in the case, is to suppose God actually to prefer the less to the greater good. We

go further and ask in what respect Satan is more truly criminal as a tempter than God is, according to this scheme? If Satan tempts, with the single purpose to secure the perpetration of iniquity, so does God, according to this scheme? If he proposes some personal advantage by the sins of others, so does God according to this scheme. If he does it to secure the final and endless ruin of others, so according to this scheme, does God.—If Dr. Tyler should say, that Satan prefers the sin of others in itself considered, and that God does not, but prefers it on the whole or all things considered; we answer first, by denying the truth of the distinction; and secondly, by asking whether if it were so, Satan would be exonerated from guilt as a tempter; and if not, how God is clear?—If Dr. Tyler should say, that Satan's intention is evil, and that of God benevolent; we answer first, by asking Dr. Tyler to prove this from their doings; and secondly, by affirming, that according to the scheme in question, the *evil intention* of Satan is the crowning excellence of the act; being that which constitutes it 'the necessary means of the greatest good,' and of course and for the same reason renders evil intention in Satan as truly good and right, as benevolent intention is in God. The question of difference between what God does and what Satan does to lead men into sin, we submit to our readers. Be this as it may, if we have rightly defined the word *tempt*,—if we know the meaning of this very common word when used in a bad sense, then the Apostle James expressly asserts, that God does not do that which is fitted to secure, and with a design to secure, sin rather than holiness in any man; and thus in the most unequivocal manner, contradicts the theory in question.—Or thus; he who leads others into sin, because on the whole he prefers their wrong action to right, is a criminal tempter. Dr. Tyler maintains that God does in this very manner lead men into sin. The Apostle James expressly denies it.*

Again; the scriptures declare, as Dr. Tyler will admit, that God wills the *perfect holiness of all mankind*. We say then that according to the scheme in question, the proof is decisive,

* While the passage of James thus clearly contradicts the scheme of Dr. Tyler, it is in no degree repugnant to that of his opponent. According to both schemes, God chooses the existence of sin; and so arranges events, that each sin occurs at the exact time and place, and under the very circumstances, fore-ordained by infinite wisdom. But on Dr. Taylor's supposition, God simply *permits* the existence of sin rather than *have no moral system*; while he directs the whole force of his law and moral government to the one point of securing (what all moral beings are able to render) perfect and unfailing obedience. All His influences and arrangements are therefore against sin, and none for the purpose of securing its commission, instead of holiness in its stead. This is directly the reverse of temptation.

that God does not will or prefer the perfect holiness of one human being. In the first place, the language of Dr. Tyler and others, correctly interpreted, is *an explicit denial* of such a preference on the part of God. Their language is, that God *on the whole* or *all things considered*, prefers the disobedience of all men to their obedience.* Now this form of expression is one of common life, and has acquired by usage, one fixed and definite meaning, which is its true and only meaning. There is no pretense, that it is used in any new or peculiar sense, when applied to the present subject; and no one is authorized to understand it in any other than its common acceptation. The simple question then is, what is our meaning, when in the common use of language, we speak of preferring one thing to another *on the whole*, or *all things considered*. Every one knows it to be, that while there are *some* reasons, which under *other* circumstances might or would lead to the opposite choice, still in view of *all* the reasons or considerations in the case, we adopt the preference specified and *not* the opposite. Thus, this language is used to describe the real and only possible preference of the mind in the case. As to say, that a body is in motion, is to deny that it is at rest, so to affirm that the mind on the whole prefers one of two objects, is to *deny* that when these objects are *compared*, it prefers the other. If we wished to deny, that a sick man prefers a pleasant fruit which would endanger life, to an offensive medicine which is necessary to restore health, we could not do it more decisively than by saying, that *on the whole* he prefers the medicine to the fruit. The most that could be said with propriety in such a case, is, that he *would* prefer the fruit to the medicine under *other* circumstances. Here then we may see the error of Dr. Tyler and others on this subject. They mistake an impossibility for a fact; by supposing that a preference, which *would* exist under other circumstances, actually *co-exists* with another preference which is directly opposed to it and excludes it. So true is this, and so well understood is this use of terms, that to speak of preferring one thing to another *on the whole*, and then gravely to assert a preference of the latter to the former, would be a violation of the proper use of language which could hardly escape ridicule. A man with these two opposing choices in a given case would be as likely to execute one as the other. Of course, if he preferred not to eat in *itself considered*, to eating,—and also preferred *on the whole* to eat, to not eating, the latter preference would furnish no security against voluntary starvation. When therefore it is said, that God

* As God has decided that his saints on earth shall not be perfect in any action, none are entirely exempt from disobedience.

on the whole prefers sin to holiness in all mankind, the language is an *explicit denial*, that he prefers in any sense, the obedience of one human being to his disobedience.

But we wish to present this topic in another light. Our question is, what reason is there to believe, according to Dr. Tyler, that God truly wills or prefers the perfect obedience of one human being, rather than his disobedience? The case is this. A father in one form expresses his will, that his children should in all instances be honest and speak the truth. At the same time, he also declares in terms equally explicit, that *on the whole* he prefers they should cheat and lie in every instance, rather than obey the precept; and that he *only* prefers perfect obedience *in itself considered*, to disobedience; which every one knows in such a case, is no preference at all. He then declares further, that he has resolved to use that degree of motive and influence, which is adapted to secure, and will in fact secure, their disobedience, (including sinful imperfection under the term) in every instance, because to disobey is the best thing they can do, as the means of good. In addition to this decisive proof of his preference *on the whole*, furnished by unequivocal declarations, he confirms it in all his doings, by securing the actual results in universal dishonesty and falsehood. Now the simple question is, what proof are *words*, when thus contradicted by both *words* and *actions*? Could Dr. Tyler,—could any man infer from *the law* of the parent, that he preferred the perfect obedience of his children, to their disobedience? Which, on the principle of pleasing the parent and doing his will, would the children do,—that which *on the whole* would please him, or that which would not? Would they with a full purpose of heart to do the will of the parent, cheat and lie, or be honest and true? Plainly the former. Not a human being can doubt it for a moment; or fail to pronounce the so-called law a mere pretense and mockery. How is it then, that both *words* and *actions*, are not as good *proof* on the part of God, as they are on the part of man? Why are not the laws of evidence as binding upon us in one case as in the other? The case is a plain one. We have indeed, according to the scheme of Dr. Tyler, God's declaration in one form that he prefers holiness to sin; but we have His unequivocal declaration in another form, that *on the whole* he prefers the sin of every human being to his perfect obedience. Now the latter declaration not merely balances the former, but absolutely annihilates all evidence of its truth. Thus in contradiction to the acknowledged and most unequivocal testimony of God, that he prefers perfect holiness to sin in all men, the proof, according to the scheme of Dr. Tyler, is absolutely decisive, that God does *not* in any sense, prefer the perfect holiness of one human being.

Once more ; We appeal to Rom. iii. 7, 8. "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner ? And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say) 'let us do evil that good may come?' whose damnation is just." In this passage we have 1st, A Jewish caviler charging on the apostle, the same doctrine which Dr. Tyler teaches, viz. that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good. 2d. We have the caviler's inference from this doctrine, viz. that he is not to be judged as a sinner. 3d. The apostle demands, why he does not also draw a further inference, and slanderously charge him as others do, with saying 'let us do evil that good may come.' He then severely denounces the authors of this slander.

Now we maintain that the apostle here disclaims in the most pointed manner a *legitimate* inference from the doctrine taught by Dr. Tyler, and thus condemns the doctrine itself. It will then be admitted, that the doctrine charged by the caviler, is the same as that which is taught by Dr. Tyler. But it is equally undeniable, that the inference 'let us do evil that good may come,' is in truth, and is represented by the apostle to be, a *legitimate* inference from the doctrine charged. We ask then, did an inspired apostle teach a doctrine, which by legitimate deduction authorizes the practical axiom, 'let us do evil that good may come?' Did he then, as his sole vindication, assert, that men deserve damnation, for simply *drawing* the just inference from his doctrine? If not, then the doctrine held by Dr. Tyler, and charged on the apostle by the Jewish caviler, was *falsely* charged. It follows therefore, that instead of teaching the doctrine which Dr. Tyler teaches, and giving the sanction of his apostolic authority to the inference drawn from it, Paul in the severity of apostolic rebuke, denounces those who charged him with the doctrine, and with authorizing in this way the slanderous inference.

We might trace the incongruities between the scriptures and the theory of Dr. Tyler, to any extent. We shall state, as summarily as may be, a few more. How can we *truly* repent of sin, when we know that we have in every act of sin, done the very thing, which is the necessary means of the greatest good—the very best thing we could do—and which on the whole is more acceptable to God, than doing the opposite? Our sorrow in such a case must be that of one who has done an act, which though undesirable *in itself*, was best adapted to some highly useful end ;—a kind of sorrow, that would surely have no tendency to break the heart, or to secure reformation.—Again ; How can we sincerely *pray*, 'lead us not into temptation,' or that we may not commit sin in our next and in each successive moral act,

when, as we have seen, there is decisive evidence that to sin will be doing that which is the necessary means of the greatest good, and that which on the whole will be more pleasing to God than obedience to his law. Cheerful *submission* to the event of sin, it would seem, should at least attend all such supplication. On the other hand, should it not rather be our fervent prayer, that we and all other men may sin in a vast majority of instances, since the greatest good, as actual events and the word of God decisively show, so obviously demands it?—Again; All will agree that it is ‘good for us to be afflicted,’ and that we ought to ‘rejoice in tribulation,’ because though evil *in itself* it is the necessary means of the greatest good. Why, then, if *moral* evil, though evil in itself, is the necessary means of the greatest good, ought we not also to rejoice in this, and praise God for all the sin which we and others have ever committed?—Again; Why ought we not, to take pleasure in other men’s sins; and do what we can, to forward the commission of them, and for the same reasons that God does; and thus contribute, as according to the highest probability we should, to the greatest good of the universe?

Again; How can we consistently with our duty, flee from the wrath to come and lay hold on eternal life, when according to the best evidence in the case, if we are yet in our sins, it is the will of God and for the greatest good, that we should continue in sin and lie down under his wrath? It is clear at least, that we ought, according to the theory of Dr. Tyler, to be willing to be damned as the high Hopkinsians teach.—How is it, that ‘one sinner destroyeth much good,’ when according to Dr. Tyler, every sin is the necessary means of the greatest good?—How is it, that our Lord properly rebuked the servant, who buried his talent in the earth, when according to Dr. Tyler, to bury it was *necessary* to secure on the whole a greater income, than to put it to the exchangers?—How is it, that those are reproved who shut up the kingdom of heaven, and neither entered themselves, nor suffered others to enter, when according to Dr. Tyler, it would prove a calamity on the whole, had one more sinner reached heaven than has reached it.—How is it, that God says in Isa. v. 4, that he has done all that can be done to bring sinners to repentance, when he could do more if he would, and would do more, did he not on the whole prefer their continued sin, to their repentance? “My child,” says a father,—“never steal—never lie—I have no pleasure *at all* that you should, compared with being honest, and true. But then, my child,” he proceeds, “I greatly prefer *on the whole*, that you should steal and lie at least in nine instances out of ten; for stealing and lying in these instances, will be the best things on the whole which you can do; and though I

shall do every thing that *can* be done to secure your obedience to my law, yet I could do much *more* if I would ; and I would do it, if I did not on the whole prefer your stealing and lying to honesty and truth. I have therefore determined to do that, and that only which will secure your almost incessant stealing and lying, because on the whole these are the best things you can do ! Such is God, according to this theory.

What, on this scheme, becomes of the glory of God in redemption, as exhibited in the scriptures ? According to the theory of Dr. Tyler, God prefers sin to holiness and decrees its existence, that thereby he may show his *mercy*, in the salvation of a part only of the human race, and this, when he could have secured the perfect holiness and happiness of all, and of his entire moral universe, throughout eternity. The case is this. A father throws his own children, or permits them to fall, from a fearful precipice, when he not only could have prevented them, but *would*, had he not determined sorely to wound them all, and ultimately to destroy many of them, that he might show his *mercy*, in healing the broken bones of others, in restoring them to comfort and happiness, and in imparting to them the peculiar joys of so great a deliverance !—How is it, according to the same theory, that God has not in the true and fearful import of the phrase, made a large part of mankind, ‘on purpose to damn them ?’ Their sin and final misery are the necessary means of the greatest good. To secure this end by this *means*, God gave them existence, placed them in those circumstances in which they would sin and only sin, and perish forever. God has no real preference or purpose whatever, that they should take the opposite course rather than this. Such a preference in the case supposed is impossible, unless God can prefer the less to the greater. On the whole therefore, or all things considered, God formed this *sole* purpose respecting them, to give them existence that they might sin and die forever. Should any one of this class of human beings, obey the perfect will of God, God would be thwarted, and crossed in his only *purpose* respecting him ; would be defeated, to his own dishonor and mortification, in respect to the very end and sole end for which he gave him existence. To sin and be damned to all eternity, is the result and the sole result in respect to the greater part of mankind, designed, preferred and purposed by their Maker. If this is not creating men on purpose to damn them, let any one tell us what would be.

Once more ; How is it, that Dr. Tyler, does not limit God in a manner the most dishonorable, both in respect to his *power* and his *goodness* ? In respect to *his power*. According to Dr. Tyler’s theory, God CANNOT produce the greatest good

without sin, as the means of it. On the one hand, although sin according to Dr. Tyler is *totally pernicious*, and in its true nature and tendency destructive of all good, yet an Omnipotent God CANNOT bless his moral universe in the highest degree without it. On the other hand, although holiness is excellent in its nature, in all its tendencies and relations; and fitted, and only fitted, and the only thing which is fitted to produce the greatest good of the universe, yet an Omnipotent God CANNOT, by this *best* means of the *best* end, secure this end. He must have *sin*, the *worst* means—he must have that which is *totally pernicious*, and destructive of all good, or he CANNOT secure the benevolent end of his creation. He has not the *power* to do it. Omnipotence itself is weakness here, without this necessary means of accomplishing its purposes. Omnipotence CANNOT accomplish the *best ends* by the best means. God has *not power* to accomplish the best ends, except by the *worst* means. To bless his moral universe in the highest degree by means of universal holiness, an Omnipotent God is unable. He must, as the only means of this end, doom multitudes of his creatures to endless sin and misery. Such, according to Dr. Tyler, is the glory of God's Omnipotence. Is it a foundation for confidence and joy under his government, or cause for consternation and dismay?

This theory too, limits the goodness of God. God, according to Dr. Tyler, could if he would, have secured the perfect holiness of this universe of moral beings forever. But the perfect holiness of all, would have secured the perfect happiness of all. When therefore God *could*, if he *would*, have made a universe of perfectly holy and happy beings, he preferred, decreed and made one comprising sin and its everlasting miseries! We ask is this goodness? Is any being truly good, who does not accomplish all the good in his power?

Besides, according to the theory advocated by Dr. Tyler, those who die in their sins, were created for this *sole* purpose, that their sins and sufferings might as the necessary means, brighten the displays of God's justice and mercy, and thus become the only means of the highest happiness of others. The advocates of this theory maintain, that God can and does increase both the *capacity* of happiness in the holy, and the *sources* of their happiness by means of sin and its miseries; and that this increase by this only means, is not only a far higher degree of happiness than the perfect happiness of perfect holiness, but is more than an equivalent for the agonies which are the necessary means of it. Accordingly, those who are finally lost, are doomed exclusively to sin and everlasting burnings, that the smoke of their torment may endear heaven to the saved, and result in joys, which otherwise they could never

know! Celestial spirits, if they utter truth in their songs, praise God—not that he vindicates his law and sustains his throne by the punishment of beings who have violated any *will* of his—but for exactly fulfilling the sole purpose of their creation; they praise God for that *peculiar* delight—those *higher and exquisite raptures*, which they could enjoy only by means of the agonies of others in everlasting fire! Would not these benevolent, happy spirits, consent to forego these *peculiar raptures*, and be satisfied with the simple but exalted joys of perfect holiness in themselves, and in a universe around them? But Dr. Tyler will have it, that a benevolent God could not be satisfied with the perfect holiness and perfect happiness of all his moral creatures; but to raise to some higher conceivable perfection the happiness of those who are saved,—they must owe it in no stinted measure to the eternal agonies of the damned!—Such is God—such is heaven, according to this theory.

What a different view of God is this, from that which exhibits him, first as adopting A MORAL SYSTEM, as the only and best means of accomplishing the high ends of infinite wisdom and goodness—adopting it indeed, notwithstanding he foresaw, that sin and suffering would to some extent be the certain result; purposing even their actual existence rather than not adopt the best system, but still determining to secure the greatest good in his power—knowing that the results, would make the fullest exhibition of himself in the production of good which he could make; doing for this end all that can be done, to secure the perfect holiness of all, consistently with securing the perfect holiness of the greatest number, and doing it with the most unqualified preference of the holiness and happiness of all, to the sin and misery of any; giving to all the assurance of his oath, that so it is; calling them to his friendship and favor with all the sincerity and tenderness and earnestness of redeeming love—even to brokenness of heart in view of that perverseness which alone forces on him the necessity of punishment; and at last giving up the incorrigible to their merited doom, not because he prefers their sin and death to their endless holiness and life, but with the sorrows of parental bereavement, because in despite of every effort which his wisdom and goodness could make to save them, they would sin and die. How diverse is this view of God, from that which the theory of Dr. Tyler presents? Who will not in view of all existing evil, rejoice in the dominion of such a God—who will not yield to his benignant will, and confide in his overflowing grace?

3. According to this theory, the worst kind of moral action is the best. Dr. Tyler will admit, that ‘sin is that abominable thing which God hateth;’—or, in the language of Dr. Woods and oth-

er advocates of this theory, 'that sin is wholly an evil'—'that it is totally pernicious'—even 'an infinite evil'—and 'destructive of all good.' And yet according to the same writers, "sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,"—"calculated for the highest good of the universe"—and has 'a most glorious tendency.' Thus, that which is *totally pernicious*, is the necessary means of the greatest good—that which is *wholly an evil* is *calculated* for the *highest good* of the universe,—that which God abhors, which is destructive of all good, even an infinite evil, has a *most glorious tendency*! In other words, the worst kind of moral action, which creatures can perform, is the best. Or thus; God can accomplish the greatest good as well without sin as with it, or he cannot. If he can, then sin is not the necessary means of that good. For to say, that it is the necessary means of that which can as well be accomplished without it as with it, is a contradiction. But if God cannot accomplish the greatest good without sin, then sin must possess such a nature, and tendency, and therefore such a relation to this end, as render it necessary to this end. Otherwise, there can be no ground or reason for adopting and using it as the means of this end. But what is the best kind of moral action, if that is not which in its nature, tendency and relations is the necessary means of the greatest good? Can any thing better, or any thing as good be substituted for sin, as the means of the greatest good? If not, then sin in every instance of its occurrence, is the best kind of moral action.

If Dr. Tyler should say, as Dr. Woods has said, "that it is God's righteous government, which counteracts the natural tendency of sin, and brings good out of evil,"—we answer, that this is avoiding one contradiction, by running into another. It is asserting that sin is the necessary means of that good of which it is not the necessary means. It is saying that sin is the necessary means of that good which has no dependence on sin, but which is produced wholly by another means or cause, viz. the divine government. It is saying that sin is the necessary means of good by having all its tendencies counteracted, and therefore a necessary means of the greatest good, which might be better produced without it, than with it,—that is, a necessary means of that of which it is not the necessary means! It is truly wonderful how even ingenious minds can delude themselves and others by the use of words. We are gravely told, that the necessary means of a given result is *overruled* and *counteracted*, in order to produce that result! A remedy, which is the necessary means of restoring health, wholly counteracted, in order to restore health! We ask what it is to overrule and counteract the necessary means of a given result, but to prevent the means from producing that re-

sult? If sin then is the necessary means of the greatest good, and if God counteracts sin, he prevents it from producing that result; i. e. according to the scheme under consideration, God causes sin the necessary means of the greatest good, to produce the greatest good, by preventing its producing the greatest good! Dr. Tyler then must either give up his doctrine that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good; or admit that it produces the greatest good by being counteracted and thus prevented from producing the greatest good; or grant that it produces it according to its true nature and tendency, and is therefore the best kind of moral action.*

4. This theory, if carried out into its legitimate consequences, leads to universalism, to infidelity, and to atheism. Dr. Tyler maintains, that God really prefers the holiness and happiness of all his moral creatures to their sin and perdition.—But Dr. Tyler also maintains that God *can* execute this preference, i. e. *can* secure the holiness and happiness of all his moral creatures. It follows therefore that God will secure the holiness and happiness of all his moral creatures. Of course all men will be saved. But this is not all. According to this scheme, the divine authority of the bible is subverted. This book confessedly abounds in the most unqualified declarations of the future endless misery of multitudes of the human race. But how can a book, which so explicitly and abundantly contradicts demonstrable, known truth, be divine? Especially how can a book pretend to claim an omnipotent and a benevolent God for its author, while it exhibits Him as creating myriads of beings, because he prefers on the whole, their sin and everlasting misery to their perfect holiness and happiness? As an Omnip-

* Those who maintain that 'sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, rely in support of their scheme, on the distinction between choosing a thing *in itself* considered, and *all things* considered. The distinction is founded in truth, but we would request our brethren to consider, in what cases it can be properly applied. Ask a watchmaker, why he admitted friction into his machinery, and he will reply, "Not as a means to the end in view, but simply because it could not be avoided. I chose the friction not in *itself* considered, but *all things* considered, i. e. rather than not make the watch." In this case the distinction is clearly applicable; it is the case presented by the supposition of Dr. Taylor.

Ask the watchmaker again, why did you introduce diamonds for the pivots of the wheels to run in. His answer is, 'I used them as the *necessary means* to the most perfect attainment of the end in view. I chose the diamond in *itself* considered, for its *intrinsic* hardness, as best adapted to give an unalterable resting-place for the wheels.'" This is the case presented by the theory of Dr. Tyler. He cannot therefore avail himself of this distinction, and say sin was not chosen in *itself* considered, for it was chosen for its intrinsic adaptedness to serve the object in view. But Dr. Taylor can avail himself of this distinction, and say that God chose the existence of sin—*all things* considered, i. e. rather than not to have a moral system, but not in *itself* considered, since it is in no respect the necessary means of good.

otent Being, he can according to Dr. Tyler, prevent such a result. As a benevolent being he must be disposed to prevent it. But according to Dr. Tyler, the scriptures clearly teach, that God will not secure the perfect holiness and happiness of his moral creation, when he can secure it. How then can a book, which belies every essential attribute of a perfect God, pretend to claim his authority?

Apply now the principles of Dr. Tyler in another form, and atheism is the consequence. Dr. Tyler will admit, that God is disposed to prevent all evil in itself considered, throughout his creation; and that this disposition is as real a preference of the divine Being as any other. But Dr. Tyler maintains also, that God *can* prevent all evil, throughout his creation. The argument then for Atheism furnished by this theory, may be thus stated. If there were a God, that is, a being of infinite power and goodness, he could prevent, and would be disposed, and therefore would in fact, prevent all evil throughout his creation. But evil exists. Therefore, there is *not* a being of infinite power and goodness—there is no God.

Or thus; Dr. Tyler will admit that a being, who has no preference in respect to the happiness and misery of his creatures, except a preference that they on the whole should be miserable rather than happy, is not God. Now Dr. Tyler maintains, that God has such a preference; and this preference if real, must, as we have shown, be his only preference in the case. But with such a preference, he is not God; and the conclusion follows; there is no God.*

If Dr. Tyler should say, it is a sufficient reply to the foregoing reasoning, that it is the reasoning of the universalist, the infidel, and the atheist; we answer, by asking whether reproach is argument; and whether the friends of God and his truth, expect to save these men from error and from death, by 'railing accusation?' We admit the fact, that the foregoing reasoning is that of the universalist, the infidel, and the atheist. But we ask, who furnishes and sustains its premises; and what conclusions, when the premises are admitted, are more unanswerable? We cannot but say, what we believe in the integrity of our heart, that supralapsarian calvinists furnish

* The following passage cited from Epicurus by Lactantius, will show that the argument for Atheism published in New-York not long since, by a society of Atheists, (vid. Chris. Spect. 1831. p. 616.) is of no modern invention. "Deus aut vult tollere mala, et non potest; aut potest et non vult; aut neque vult neque potest; aut et vult et potest.—Si vult et non potest, imbecillis est, quod in Deum non cadit. Si potest et non vult, invidus, quod æque alienum a Deo. Si neque vult, neque potest, et invidus et imbecillis est, ideoque neque Deus. Si vult et potest, quod solum Deo convenit; unde ergo sunt mala, aut cur illa non tollit." Lactantii Op. p. 747.

the grand principle on which these conclusions rest; and combining their powers of argument in its defense, with all their means of influencing the faith of others, give to it, and to the conclusions founded on it, a delusive and fearful infallibility in the minds of thousands. The principle is, *that an Omnipotent God, by the mere dint of power, can secure the universal holiness and happiness of his moral creatures.* Were the opposite principle admitted by our brethren to be even *possible* truth, we would not complain. But when we witness their zeal and their efforts to defend and to propagate this principle, when we see and know, that it is made the chief corner-stone of universalism, infidelity, and atheism itself, we cannot but feel that great evils result from the gratuitous and confident assumption of this principle. We cannot but say, that in our honest belief the advocates of this principle greatly but inconsiderately, contribute to the support of the most destructive errors; and that it becomes them to look most seriously to the facts in the case. We think, that had they seen what we have witnessed—would they trace the errors alluded to, to their true source,—or would they even try the experiment of reasoning on the opposite *supposition*, and with bishop Butler say to these errorists, ‘you reason from your ignorance,’ they who are sunk in the worst of errors, might be led to suspect the soundness of their principles. Sure we are, that a very limited acquaintance with facts, would show that the principle advocated by Dr. Tyler and others is the very same, which in the hands of Voltaire and other enemies of the gospel, has spread infidelity and atheism to such a fearful extent throughout Europe, and is in fact the basis of all that latitudinarianism, which rejects christianity, and calmly reposes on false and undefined notions of the goodness and power of God. Indeed we know not a more striking illustration of the appalling tendency and results of adopting an unauthorized elementary principle in reasoning. When men reason from principles, which the friends of christianity regard as false or groundless, there is hope, that their errors will be exposed, and that the truth will be triumphantly defended. But when the professed advocates of christianity espouse and vindicate the very principles, which in the way of legitimate deduction, support the most destructive error, what are we to expect, but that light will become darkness, and whole nations perish? At any rate, it is hardly becoming in those to reproach an argument, who, by furnishing its premises, render it absolutely unanswerable, at least to themselves.

5. According to the theory of Dr. Tyler, sin is the necessary means of a *higher* degree of happiness, than the *highest*. ‘The law of the Lord is perfect.’ Universal and perfect obedience to this law would therefore secure the highest happiness of the moral

universe. What then shall we say of the law of God, if perfect and universal obedience to it, would prove a curse, instead of a blessing to his moral kingdom? And yet this must be said, or it must be true, that perfect and universal obedience to the law of God is the necessary means of the highest happiness of his moral universe. But Dr. Tyler maintains, that sin is the necessary means of a higher good than holiness. Of course sin is the necessary means of a *higher* degree of happiness than the *highest*.

If Dr. Tyler should say, that the capacity of happiness and the actual happiness of those who are saved, will be greatly increased by means of their own sins and the sins and miseries of others, beyond what would otherwise be possible, it would become Dr. Tyler to prove the truth of such an assertion. Let him show, how it is even possible, that moral beings by perverting their moral powers, and doing violence to their nature as moral beings, can increase their capacity of happiness, more than by the perfect exercise of these powers in obeying the perfect law of their Maker; or how the sins and miseries of other beings can be necessary to the highest happiness of the benevolent spirits of the saved. Let him show, that every redeemed sinner has not lost more happiness by sin, than he has gained by it; let him show that the redeemed in glory rejoice and are glad, that they and others once trampled on their Maker's authority. Let Dr. Tyler give us an exact computation of the entire results of sin and of holiness through time and eternity—the sum total of happiness lost, and happiness gained, and misery incurred, by sin; let him show, by his newly invented arithmetic, how much misery endured by some, is an exact equivalent for a given amount of happiness gained by others, fairly and accurately strike the balance of the latter as it actually exists, and thus give us a demonstration that the universe of God is a happier universe by means of sin, than had perfect holiness and perfect happiness prevailed, and sin and sorrow never been known. Until we have some accurate computation on this subject,—something like proof, that benevolence is blessed by the sins and woes of others, let it not be said that the spirits above derive a higher degree of happiness, than would otherwise be possible, from the sins and miseries of the lost.

6. The theory in question confounds right and wrong, and thus subverts all moral distinctions. It is not the name which constitutes moral action right and wrong. It is not that God has commanded one, and forbidden the other. There is in the nature of moral action *a reason* for God's requirement and prohibition. There is a tendency in one kind of moral action to good, and in the other to evil, which constitutes the one right and the other wrong. If then sin, as Dr. Woods says of it, "is undoubtedly calculated

for the highest good of the universe," or as another says of it, 'is of a most glorious tendency,' then it is morally right. It has that nature, tendency or fitness, which constitutes moral action, right. It has the essential element of moral excellence. Sin then, as the necessary means of the greatest good, sustains the best relation to the happiness of the universe conceivable. Holiness in its stead, would have no such useful tendency, no such excellent relation. Were it substituted for sin, it would mar the beauty and the happiness of God's creation. Universal obedience to the perfect law of God, would prove a calamity instead of a blessing to his moral kingdom. Sin and sin only, is that by which the great end of infinite benevolence—the highest happiness of the universe can be secured. This is the reason, according to Dr. Tyler, why God prefers sin to holiness—why he has decreed its extensive prevalence in this world, and why in his word and his providence, he has so clearly revealed his preference of it to holiness in its stead. But what more decisive proof of the excellent nature and tendency of sin can be furnished? If the declaration of God in the form of *law*, is evidence of his preference of holiness to sin, his declaration in the form of *doctrine* is as good evidence, that he *on the whole* prefers sin to holiness, while in respect to the latter preference, we have the additional and confessedly decisive proof of actual events in his providence. Sin, therefore, in every instance of its occurrence, is proved by the highest kind of evidence, to be the best kind of moral action. Thus sin is no longer sin, vice is no longer vice. Right and wrong, according to this theory, have changed places; and what God has pronounced, and man regarded, as wrong moral action, is right moral action.

If Dr. Tyler should reply as Dr. Woods does, by merely saying, that this is "wounding misrepresentation;" we answer *first*, that it is *not* a misrepresentation, and that no unprejudiced mind, can be stultified into the belief, that the necessary means of the greatest good is not an excellent thing—even the best thing in its place. Is not that remedy which is necessary to save life, though *unpleasant or painful in itself*, the best thing to which a dying man can resort? Is not that which is the only infallible means of an end, the best means of that end? If this is not so, language has no meaning, and it is impossible to utter truth or falsehood in the use of it.—We answer *secondly*, if this representation is *wounding*, let the theory that justifies it be abandoned, and the wound will be healed. If Dr. Tyler should say, that he utterly *denies*, that sin is a good thing,—we answer, that we are fully aware of this, and regard it as a peculiarly grateful fact. But then, Dr. Tyler also asserts that sin is a good thing—and as the means of good *the best* thing, in every instance in which he asserts, that 'it is the

necessary means of the greatest good.' And is a man to be allowed without correction, to say that which is not true half the time, because he says that which is true the other half? Now it is this happy inconsistency, which saves those who maintain this theory, from being the very worst of heretics. For if without ever contradicting themselves, they should preach from sabbath to sabbath, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good; if they were with entire uniformity, to exhibit sin under this single but excellent relation, as the best means of the best end, and as much better than holiness in its stead, more acceptable and pleasing to God on the whole in every instance in which it takes place, how could they more effectually become the ministers of sin?

But happily, our brethren, though they assert all this, according to the true import of their language, do also for all practical purposes contradict these statements. In such cases they exhibit sin in its true nature and under its true relations—exhibit what, according to their theory, is the *best* kind of moral action, as being what it is in truth, the *worst*. We doubt not, that in this combination of truth with error, there is a great preponderance of truth in their preaching. Our regret is, that they do not give that power to their instructions which would result from the uniform exhibition of sin as *wholly an evil*. This they would do, were they to admit even the possibility of what it seems difficult to deny, viz. that God permits sin for some other reason, than that it is better as the means of good, than holiness in its stead.

7. According to the theory in question, mankind are bound to believe, that they shall please and glorify God more by sin, than by obedience, and therefore to act accordingly. God, according to this theory, *on the whole* prefers sin to holiness in every instance in which the former takes place. But we have proved, that such a preference of sin, utterly excludes all preference of holiness in its stead; and must therefore be regarded as his *only* preference in the case. It should be remembered too, that God on the whole, prefers sin to holiness in men, (if we admit the sinful imperfection of his people,) in *every* instance of moral action. At least, the instances in which he thus prefers sin to holiness, are as hundreds, or even as thousands to one. What then is the evidence before us, as to the will of God respecting the moral conduct of his creatures, in any proposed instance? Is it not absolutely decisive, that he wills, and *only* wills, their sin rather than their holiness? This is what men are bound to believe, if they yield to the laws of rational faith. We need not say, that they are bound to *act* according to such a belief.

If Dr. Tyler should say, that not God's *secret* will, but his *revealed* will, is the rule of action to his moral creatures; we answer

first, that on this scheme, God has *no secret will* on the subject; His preference of sin, on the whole to holiness is clearly *revealed*, according to Dr. Tyler, in regard to every human being. Nor is this all. As we have seen, the evidence both from the word and the providence of God, is as hundreds—as thousands to one, in each contemplated moral action, that he who sins will not only better please God, than by obedience, but that he will accord with what we have shown to be the *only* will or preference of God in respect to such moral action. If it is God's will or preference *on the whole*, that men should do wrong rather than right and this not only in one instance of moral action, but in a vast majority of instances, this certainly is no *secret will*.

But Dr. Tyler may say, the one is the *preceptive*, the other the *decretive* will of God. We deny the distinction, as made by the present theory; having shown the two opposite wills supposed, to be impossible. But if it were admitted, what reason is furnished by this fact, why his subjects should do the former rather than the latter? The *decretive* will, according to Dr. Tyler, is that which God, in a great majority of instances, will carry into execution in actual events; and by the doing of which on the part of creatures, the greatest good will be effected, and God himself most pleased and glorified. Why then should men do God's *preceptive* will, rather than his *decretive* will? Shall they, in deference to a mere *word*, sacrifice the highest good of the universe, contravene the will and impair the glory of God? But it may be said, that God's *preceptive* will is plainly given as the *only* rule of action to his creatures? But we ask how does this appear; or how according to the laws of rational faith, can men believe this? Does not the decretive will of God respect human action, as truly as his preceptive will; is it not as distinctly revealed; has not God in the providential execution of his will given far higher evidence that he prefers sin to holiness, than that he prefers holiness to sin; or rather (and this must decide the question) is not the *decretive* will, a preference of God that men *on the whole* and in a vast majority of instances should sin rather than obey, a preference which renders any opposite will in the case utterly impossible and incredible? And now, are the moral creatures of God to submit to that will of God, which is *no* will, because it is called *preceptive*? Or, are they to submit to that will of God, which we have shown is the *ONLY* will, that God, according to Dr. Tyler, can have in respect to human action? Plainly, if men would judge according to the evidence in the case, and so do the will of God;—if they would please and glorify him most; do the most good they can, and so perform the best kind of moral action, *they must sin*; in other words, 'men must do evil that good may come.'

8. Nothing worse can be imputed to the worst of men than the theory under consideration imputes to God. According to this theory, God purposes sin, not for its own sake, or in itself considered, but as the means of good, i. e. on account of certain advantages resulting from it. Now the same things are true in every substantial respect of the assassin. He who takes the life of a fellow being for money, commits the crime not for its own sake, but for the advantage to be gained by it, in the way of consequence. Could he, by flattery or by any device acceptable or gratifying to his victim, secure the treasure desired, he *would* greatly prefer this means of attaining the end, to the perpetration of crime. In other words, acts of kindness *would* be preferred, rather than the deed of cruelty and death, aside from the necessity of the latter as the means of the desired end. Now, whether Dr. Tyler calls this state of mind a *preference* or not; it is exactly the same state of mind which his theory ascribes to God, when he maintains, that God prefers holiness in itself considered to sin. The assassin does not prefer to commit the crime in itself considered. Nor does any human being in the commission of sin fail to see and to *feel*, that holiness in itself considered is better than sin. He is conscious, that if he could secure the advantage which he proposes, by the former as well as by the latter, he *would* greatly prefer it. Now if these views and feelings, by whatever name they are called, are morally right,—if they are morally excellent in God—if they are the proofs of his moral perfection, they are equally right and excellent, and equally proofs of moral perfection, in the assassin. For the moral rectitude of mental feelings depends not on the being whose feelings they are, but on their nature. On the other hand, the preference or purpose of the assassin, which prompts to the deed of death, is substantially the same as that which this theory ascribes to God. The murderer prefers and purposes the act, not without a sensible reluctance and recoil of feeling in itself considered, but *on the whole*, or *all things considered*. The act is the necessary means of an end. He cannot secure the end without committing the crime, and therefore he resolves to commit it. So God, according to Dr. Tyler, prefers sin and purposes its existence not in itself considered, but *on the whole* or *all things considered*—as the necessary means of the greatest good; and therefore resolves to secure its existence. If then, this state of mind is criminal in the assassin, why is not the same state of mind in God, or in any other moral being also criminal?

Should Dr. Tyler here say, there is an important difference in the two cases,—that God does not *perform* the act which he purposes, and that the murderer does; we answer, that he who has the same *state of mind* in respect to the murderous act of another,

preferring it on the whole, and taking measures to secure it, for substantially the same *reasons* as he who performs the act, is as truly a murderer, as the perpetrator of the deed. But Dr. Tyler may say, that God's purpose respects the *general* good; that of the murderer his own private, personal interest. We answer, first, if this be so, the moral nature of these purposes according to Dr. Tyler's theory, is alike. True, one would be a benevolent purpose the other a selfish purpose. But then, that which *constitutes* a benevolent purpose in God morally excellent, pertains, according to Dr. Tyler, to the selfish purpose of the assassin; viz a *tendency* (as a necessary means) to the greatest good. If benevolence in God is morally excellent, because it tends to produce and is necessary to produce the greatest good, it follows that if selfishness in man, tends to produce, and is necessary to produce the greatest good, selfishness in man is morally excellent. But we answer secondly, that Dr. Tyler, according to his principles, cannot show, that acts of assassination have not been, and may not be, perpetrated from the same motives as those with which, he represents God as on the whole, preferring sin to holiness, viz. a desire to promote the general good. According to Dr. Tyler every man who knows any thing as he ought to know, knows that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, as truly as God knows it. He knows that if he perpetrates the murder, his act will be the very act which is necessary to the greatest good; he knows that these truths are even taught abundantly in the word of God, and so corroborated by the actual events of his providence, as to render it certain that *some* sin in every case, and nothing but sin in a vast multitude of cases, is essential to the perfection of this system. In addition to this, the specific act of assassination, might in view of tendencies and consequences, appear to the murderer, not only to be useful, but the indispensable means of the greatest good. Now such evidence of the utility of this act combined with the proof, which is as hundreds—as thousands to one, that sin in the next moral act, will be the necessary means of the greatest good, goes to show that this is the very act which God himself prefers rather than any other, and in regard to which he has but one will, viz. that the deed be done.

To test the point still further, we will suppose the individual arraigned for the alledged crime—how is he to be convicted, according to Dr. Tyler's principles, of malice prepense? The act of killing is confessed, but the plea of the accused is, that he had a dependent, famishing family, while the victim had none—that many could be saved from premature death and made happy by the sacrifice of an individual—that God too has clearly revealed his preference of sin to holiness in a vast majority of instances, and declared it to be the necessary means of the great-

est good—thus establishing the principle that the end sanctifies the means—that the evidence that this was the best possible moral action in his power, was decisive, and altogether sufficient to authorize and require him so to believe—that he did so believe, and with a design to promote the general good and to please his Maker, he did the deed. Now, Dr. Tyler, himself being judge, how shall the accused be fairly convicted of malice prepense? Let Dr. Tyler condemn the accused on any principle, which will not also condemn his Maker.

If Dr. Tyler should say that the objections which we have brought against this theory, are the same as those which the enemies of sound doctrine commonly charge on the doctrine of the divine purpose respecting sin, we answer, that this is more easily said than proved. It is indeed readily confessed, that these objections have been often charged on that *form* of the doctrine which is taught by supralapsarian calvinists; viz. the theory that God prefers the existence of sin rather than holiness in its stead. But it admits of a question, whether these objections were ever alledged against the true doctrine, the simple naked fact, that God, for *some reason* purposes the existence of sin. Who among Arminians, or even Unitarians, at least in this age, would deny the universality of God's providential government and purposes, as the basis of confidence and submission under all evil? Pres. Edward says, "I trust that there is no christian divine but what will allow that it is agreeable to God's will so to order and dispose things—that this perfect wickedness should be a necessary (i. e. as he explains the term, *certain*) consequence." It is then, we think, much to be doubted whether the doctrine of God's purposes in its simple form, has ever, at least to any important extent, been directly assailed by these objections. It seems to us, that it is only when this doctrine is modified, or rather essentially changed, either by those who have taught, or by those who oppose it, into the identical form given it by Dr. Tyler, that it has ever had to encounter these objections. This view of the subject is strikingly confirmed by those instances of caviling and objection in the scriptures, to which we have already adverted. We have shown that the objections in these instances, were based on the self-same doctrine which is taught by Dr. Tyler, viz. that God prefers sin to holiness; and that this doctrine is explicitly denied, in the one instance, with the severity of apostolic rebuke, and in the other, under the solemnity of an oath from God.—If we may advert to our own experience, we are confirmed in these views of the subject by all our intercourse with others. We even think it will be found in respect to that large class of evangelical Arminians, who *professedly* deny the doctrine of decrees, that in their distinct recognition of the duty of submission under all evil,

they do *really* and *practically* believe the doctrine, that the providential purposes of God extend to all actual events. They may and they do deny the doctrine of *decrees*, when presented under this *name*. But in so doing, we apprehend, they deny and intend to deny simply the doctrine, that God prefers the existence of sin rather than of holiness in its stead; and thus in fact only deny a perversion of the true doctrine. That doctrine, we trust, will be rescued from this perversion; and the simple but sublime truth, that the purposes of God extend to every event, instead of being a theme of endless controversy, become the professed, as it is the actual faith of all true christians.

We have thus examined the two principal theories of Dr. Tyler, and endeavored to test their correctness, by following them out into their necessary consequences. This mode of reasoning, we know, has been condemned by many, as irritating and painful to those against whom it is directed. In the present case, however, Dr. Tyler has led the way and set us the example. He has done right, for it is the only kind of reasoning which can be used, to any great extent, in detecting errors in *first principles*. In what way can we expose the many false axioms which have come down to us, sanctified by authority, and embraced without examination, except by comparing their results with the infallible decisions of common sense, and pronouncing them, what they are, absurdities and contradictions? Such is the mode of reasoning which peculiarly distinguishes the inquiries of Edwards into subjects of this nature. Should it be said that many mysteries hang over the origin and perpetuation of sin in this world, we freely grant it, but *mystery* is one thing and *absurdity* quite another. Should it be urged, that equal or greater absurdities pertain to any other view which can be taken of these subjects, we answer that we cannot feel the force of such a reply. It can be no reason for continuing to maintain a scheme which is encumbered with the grossest absurdity, that equal absurdities (if this be so) belong to other schemes. God can never hold us responsible for the belief of what is plainly involved in absurdity and contradiction. While we conscientiously think, that such is the character of the two theories under consideration, we are very far from intimating however that the conclusions which we have urged upon Dr. Tyler, form any part of his belief; and we are equally far from intending any disrespect or unkindness towards him, in subjecting his scheme to this rigid examination. Associated as we have been for many years with Dr. Tyler, in the most endearing relations of christian enterprise and communion, no difference of opinion, we trust, will ever weaken those sentiments of mutual regard which were formed and cherished, when he was numbered among us as one of the conductors of the *Christian Spectator*.

Before we leave this topic, we have one thing more to say respecting ourselves. Efforts have been industriously made in many parts of our country, to hold forth the conductors of this work, as responsible for a long and painful controversy, which tends, it is said, to distract the church, and to waste the strength and exasperate the feelings of the ministry, in refined speculations of no practical use. The charge is utterly unfounded. The two theories which we have now examined, embrace almost absolutely *every topic*, involved in what has been called the New-Haven controversy. If these theories are false, as we contend they are, if they do encumber the orthodox system with the absurdities and contradictions which have now been pointed out—if most of the objections urged against this system by its enemies, have really been founded on these *theories*, and not on the *doctrines* of New-England calvinism—then the discussion in which we have engaged, is one of momentous, *practical* importance to our churches and the cause of Christ at large. Without claiming any exemption from the ordinary errors of men in relation to this subject, we do insist, that the character which the discussion has assumed at every step, has been forced upon us by our brethren, who have come forward to oppose our sentiments. In entering on the subject in our Review of Taylor and Harvey, we distinctly presented the two theories now considered, as the only topics worthy of serious discussion. We explicitly stated, that we had no anxiety to establish any peculiar theories or solutions of our own, in the room of those which we opposed. In respect to the *certainty* of sin, we simply rejected the theory of a specific propagated propensity to evil, and contended with Edwards, that the acknowledged facts of the case would account for this certainty, without any additional supposition, hypothesis, or theory in the case; and that at all events, if we could not discover the ground of this certainty, the certainty itself remained unaltered.* In calling in question the theory, that 'sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,' we stated expressly (in common with Dr. Taylor in the sermon under review,) that we had "no wish to establish the *contrary* assumption," (p. 384) for we considered it important in no other light than as offering a *possible* alternative, in renouncing the theory to which we objected. How then have our brethren met us on the two points at issue, as thus stated from the very commencement of the discussion? By turning instantly aside to attack what they called our theories,—by charging us in the face of our most solemn protestations, with maintaining

* Page 365-6.

that men are not sinful—are even *holy*—by nature; and that God *could not* prevent the existence of sin! Thus assailed with misrepresentation and obloquy, branded as Arminians and Pelagians, we have been repeatedly driven in self-defense, to dwell on topics which we have never regarded as of the least importance, when compared with the great questions at issue, “Is sin a propagated, essential property of the human soul? Is it the necessary means of the greatest good?” Compelled in this way by our brethren themselves, to turn aside from these momentous questions to the discussion of points on which we had never wished to dwell, we have been next charged, with disturbing the peace of the church, by incessantly harping on favorite theories, and hazardous speculations of our own, to no profit. At every step in this progress, we have endeavored to bring back our brethren to the real points at issue—to obtain a fair discussion of the two questions stated above, without any regard to our own theories or suppositions, whether right or wrong—but years have passed away, volumes literally have been written upon the subject, and yet not ten pages have been produced in support of the position, that sin is a propagated quality of the soul, or the necessary means of the greatest good. We call the attention of the public to this striking fact. We ask our brethren in what way it can be explained, without a frank confession, that it is much more easy to find fault with others, than to support those favorite theories, on which they imagine the calvinistic system to depend?

But if we know any thing about the present state of the public mind, the controversy can never have an end, until the questions stated above, are fairly met and finally settled. A very large and increasing body both of the clergy and laity, whose devotion to the cause of Christ and the doctrines of grace, place their characters above all reproach, are utterly dissatisfied with the two theories which have now been examined. They find them a perpetual theme of obloquy among the enemies of divine truth, and a fatal impediment in a multitude of instances, to the progress of revivals of religion. They will never rest till objections of the kind which we have now stated are fully obviated, and the subject relieved of the difficulties in which it is now involved. It is not then in the spirit of controversy, but from an earnest desire of peace, that we would press upon Dr. Tyler and the brethren who agree with him, the indispensable necessity of meeting the question here. If this is not promptly and fully done, if the objections now presented are not wholly set aside, by some other means than an appeal to names and systems of theology, the public will not hesitate to decide that it *cannot* be done by argument.

ART. VII.—DOUGLAS ON ERRORS IN RELIGION.

Errors regarding Religion. By JAMES DOUGLAS. Crocker & Brewster, Boston.
Jonathan Leavitt, New-York.

WE have taken up this work, not so much for the purpose of examining its contents in detail, as of laying before our readers the result of our own reflections on some of the principal topics which are here discussed. The author is already well known to the American public by his eloquent work on the advancement of society. His views on every subject are large and comprehensive. The structure and habits of his mind are those of a philosopher, dwelling less upon insulated facts than great principles. The leading characteristic of his mind is *generalization* on the broadest scale;—an admirable quality when properly directed, but peculiarly apt to seduce the mind into false though ingenious theories. Of this we have a striking instance, in Mr. D.'s attempt to reduce all the errors in religion, which have prevailed in countries destitute of revelation, to two classes, *polytheism*, as the faith of the vulgar, and *pantheism*, of refined and philosophic minds. These two systems are directly opposed to each other; and it would be singular if the human mind, in all its wanderings from religious truth, had made it a uniform rule never to wander, except into these two extremes. We should rather expect the whole interval between them to be filled with various forms of error, and there have been in fact many false systems of belief which were neither polytheistic nor pantheistic. Such was that of the aborigines of this country, who believed in one great spirit, possessing a distinct individuality. Still it must be admitted, that Mr. Douglas has shown great ingenuity in tracing out the various forms of pantheism, as well in the philosophy of the Greeks and Romans, as of the eastern nations of Asia, the heretics of the Jewish and christian churches, and the mystics of modern times. This part of the work will repay the attention bestowed upon it by those who are interested in such inquiries,—who are curious to examine the various forms of error, which may derive their existence from a single false principle.

It is a just remark of Mr. Douglas in his introduction, and one which is of great importance in its applications, that "error, to be believed, must include a considerable proportion of truth." The human understanding cannot be so imposed upon even by a depraved inclination, as to assent to a system of entire and unmingled falsehood. Truth is the natural and appropriate object of the mind. False and inconsistent views of things are in themselves, unsatisfying. The mind never rests in them, unless under

a strong perverting influence, and unless those views also wear something of the appearance of reality. Illustrations of the remark just quoted, will be found as we proceed, even in the grossest forms of delusion. On the other hand, much error may be believed, even by enlightened minds, when presented in connection with important truth. The error and the truth, taken together, constitutes a whole, the versimilitude of which deceives the mental eye. Certain views appear *like* the truth, and without thorough examination, are confided in, as such. Theological errors often arise and are perpetuated in this very way. Objections are brought against fundamental doctrines of the bible, and the theologian is obliged to meet them. His philosophy, not his common sense, furnishes him with an explanation which he thinks will answer, and by association, it soon becomes as sacred in his eyes as the doctrine itself; and then he will as soon part with the bible as with his favorite theory. In his estimation, they stand or fall together. The truth of the doctrine shields the falsity from examination. Such is the origin of many a theological dogma.

We have alluded to the theory of our author, that all the systems of religious belief which have prevailed in countries destitute of revelation, are reducible to two, polytheism and pantheism. Polytheism supposes the existence, and embraces the worship, of many deities, to each of which it assigns a proper and distinct individuality. According to the scheme of pantheism, there is but one original principle, from which all existence, material and intelligent, springs or *emanates*. This is the earliest form of pantheism, and is called the Emanative System. Strict pantheism, however, is a refinement even upon this. It considers the universe itself as God, and as truly and properly constituting but one existence. The emanative system forms the religious belief of the Hindoos generally at the present day, and is extensively prevalent among the philosophers and divines of Germany. In our own country we have a modification of pantheism in the doctrine of divine efficiency. According to that doctrine, God is the originator not only of all being, but of all action, even the volitions of his creatures. This resembles pantheism, inasmuch as it makes God the only real *agent* in the universe, and refers all events, as well the choices of intelligent beings, as the changes of the material world, to his direct physical agency, which agency, moreover, is resolved into acts of the divine will. Thus, on the scheme of divine efficiency, all the changes that take place, both in the natural and moral world, either virtually are, or directly *flow from*, acts of the divine will; and, in the emanative form of Pantheism, "all

changes are considered as taking place in the divine substance itself." The doctrine in question, therefore, is essentially pantheistic.

In comparing polytheism with pantheism, we find that the former is more congenial to the human mind, of earlier origin, and has more universally prevailed, where there has been no revelation. It is the religion of the populace, the growth of superstition, addressed to the senses, rather than to the intellect. Pantheism, on the other hand, is an intellectual system, the growth of philosophy, the religion of the learned, too refined for the mass of a people. Polytheism calls to activity in the various observances of an extensive and imposing system of worship; Pantheism invites to the quiet contemplation of high and absorbing mysteries, awarding the reputation of superior sanctity to him who shall come nearest to the state of calm and lofty repose. Comparing the *verisimilitude* of the two systems, we observe that polytheism teaches the distinct individuality and voluntary agency of all intelligent beings, both God, and the creatures of his power; approximates to the idea of a moral government on the part of God, and an accountability on the part of man; and keeps in view, not indeed with the clearness and impressiveness of gospel light, yet truly, the social relations of man to his fellow. Pantheism takes away the idea that man is a real agent, and annihilates of course the idea of accountability, of law given, and government exercised on the part of God, of obligation to obey on the part of man, and danger from his displeasure. It strikes moreover at the root of all social, communicated happiness, by requiring and promoting a state of passivity or perfect indifference, in regard to all the concerns of life, as the best preparative for being swallowed up in the great ocean of existence. But wide as the distinction is between truth and Pantheism, it is remarkable that the same language may be made the vehicle of both. The Hindoo priest would unite with Madame Guion, and Madame Guion would unite with the true christian, in saying "that God is all, and in all;" but the sense in which the two former would use the language, would be wide as the poles apart from that of the latter. The priest of Hindooism would express his belief that every thing existing, matter or mind, is a part of the divine being. Madame Guion would express as strong a conviction as she could possibly make herself feel, that she was, and ought to feel herself to be properly and metaphysically, nothing, a *mere cypher*; while the christian would assert in this language, the universal dominion of God over the intelligent and material universe. It is obvious to notice the resemblance of these errors to the truth, as well as their distance from it.

In the progress of his work we often find Mr. Douglass ascribing the ignorance and error of the heathen world to the weakness of the human understanding. "If ever truth *could* have been discovered and excogitated by the human mind itself, it must have been in the favored times and situation of Greece." Such have been the sentiments of many, but St. Paul shall be our authority for a contrary doctrine. Speaking of these very philosophers whose highest efforts Mr. D. supposes not only to have been actually, but *necessarily* unsuccessful, he says that they "held the truth in unrighteousness," i. e. unrighteously *detained* it from the mass of the people, and gave them vile superstition in stead. If they did this, they were not only competent to know the truth, but *did* actually know it to some extent; and it is to no purpose, now to set up a defense for them on the ground of their inability. The apostle has decided the whole question for us. It had been found by abundant experience, that there are some truths which none would ever discover; that there are others, which, though obvious and well known to philosophers, would not be communicated by them to the world; and that a direct revelation, with a peculiar accompaniment of impressive, providential influences, was necessary to secure the effect of truth revealed, and of truth already known. Here, we think, is the true account of the necessity of a revelation. Mr. D. makes a distinction between "that which is *discoverable* by reason, and that which is *demonstrable* by reason, when once discovered." The difference though often dwelt on, is not apparent to our minds. If we have access to the *proof* of any fact, we certainly have access to the *fact* itself; as truly as the sum of two numbers is known, when the numbers themselves are given. To suppose a thing to be "demonstrable by reason," is to suppose that reason can find the *materials* for the demonstration; and with the necessary materials, or facts, for proving any truth, the truth itself is attainable. So the apostle supposes, that the gentiles might have known all that was necessary to be known of God, γινώσκοντες τοῦ Θεοῦ, because the evidence lay before them in the "*things which are made.*" The fact that the requisite evidence was accessible, led St. Paul unhesitatingly to assert that the truths proved by it, "the eternal power and godhead" of the Divine Being, were "manifest" to them, or discoverable, if not discovered.

One remark we would make here on the habit of decrying the power of reason, or of the human mind, to discover moral truth. Its tendency is powerfully to lighten conscience of guilt and lessen the sense of responsibility. The excuses we make for others, are the more zealously searched out, and the more cheerfully given, because, when occasion demands, they will answer

just as well for ourselves. Or perhaps it is a "voluntary humility," the result of an impression, that the soul has not only used its moral powers wrong, but that its intellectual faculties are miserably poor and defective, and the more deeply sensible we are of that fact, the better we are. Such feelings are not founded on just views of things, or of the will of God. Men do not generally fail in the *perception* of truth and duty, certainly not until they have, by habitual sin, blinded their own eyes. Intellect and conscience do their office, even when we little suppose it to be the case. We do not speak here of those dark and misty reasonings which are sent up from a perverse heart, to becloud the understanding; beneath them, there is always an undercurrent of clear conception and strong conviction of the truth, which tests and proves, if any thing can, the genuine power of human reason in its appropriate exercise, to discern the realities of things. But there are limits, and those speedily attained, where that power fails. Within them, why may not we walk, as if we were treading upon solid ground, as the Author of reason doubtless intended we should? Beyond them, it would be of no practical benefit, if we could go, and therefore we need not mourn over the weakness of reason. Its powers are exactly fitted to our condition, and *relatively to that condition*, are neither weak nor strong, neither occasion for pride, nor self-contempt.

The use of reason in religion has been a subject of much dispute. The views of Mr. Douglas on this point, appear to be somewhat vague and indefinite. At one time, he admits, that in the highest sense of the language, "no doctrine is to be received that is contrary to reason;" at another, he condemns, the principle, "that whatever human reason stigmatizes as false, should by no means be received as true in theology." It is evident at once, that no advance can be made towards settling the question, without fixing the sense in which the word reason is to be used. If by *reason* is meant a power competent to decide infallibly on the truth or falsity of *every thing* that may be contained in a professed revelation, *independent of the evidence that such a revelation is from a perfect God*, we say, and all would doubtless say, that there is no such power in the human mind. It is plain that there may be facts, and it is even unphilosophical not to suppose that there are, which, in the present circumstances of our being, we *cannot* know, unless God reveals them; and which, when revealed, may be found to be of a nature altogether different from any thing with which we were before acquainted. The boundless circle of divine knowledge undoubtedly embraces multitudes of facts, bearing no resemblance to any thing known on earth; and when a professed revelation come to us with a declaration of a fact of this kind, what other evidence can we find,

of any kind or degree, respecting the truth or falsity of the declaration, except simply that which bears upon the question of its divine origin? The declared fact is, by the supposition, *above*, not *contrary* to the analogies of human knowledge. It is not *contrary* to any of these analogies, because none of them touch the subject. In such a case then, how can man decide *a priori*, *independent* of the evidence of divine testimony, any more than an untutored savage can decide on the correctness of Kepler's laws, by referring to something within the circle of his previous knowledge, refusing all confidence in the superior knowledge of the individual who should repeat them to him? Even if we should, therefore, admit it as a correct principle, that "no doctrine is to be received as true, which is contrary to reason," there might be many declarations in a professed revelation, and doubtless would be many in a true one, which the principle would not touch. No one has ever so defined reason as that, under the shadow of his definition, its decisions could with propriety be maintained to cover the whole ground over which God *may* lead us in a revelation, and, we may say, has actually led us, in that which he has given.

In the second place, if by *reason* is meant the human understanding perverted by the influence of the will, or heart, desiring countenance in its evil purposes, we say at once that the whole system of religious truth is *opposed* to whatever decisions may be made by the understanding, or reason, under such an influence. For what is the nature of these decisions? Are they the *real* convictions of the mind respecting what is, in fact, true, or false? Are they not rather, first, wishes that certain things *may* prove true, then indefinite hopes that they *will*, and lastly,—the light of truth having all the while been studiously kept out of view, and those things alone contemplated, which are favorable to the desired conclusion,—a kind of half-persuasion that they *are*? a persuasion, which, as it is the creature of darkness, is always instantly dissipated before the light of truth, and then the real convictions of the mind, its true decisions, start forth clear and triumphant. Persuasions of this kind, if they deserve to be called by that name, are indeed irreconcilable with the great doctrines of the christian system. That system was designed to destroy their influence, to annihilate them, and to quicken the dormant energies of truth which are latent in the mind. Views of things formed in the manner described, are essential errors; and to say that no doctrine is to be received which is contrary to them, is to say that no doctrine is to be received which is true. We might as well hope to reconcile holiness and sin, right and wrong, ignorance and knowledge, as the truth of God with those decisions of reason which are made under the influence of a perverse heart.

But if, in the third place, by *reason* is meant the intellectual faculty, exercised aright, i. e. independent of any perverting influence, and on subjects within the reach of its powers, we know not how we can, nor why we need, or ought, to avoid adopting the principle, that nothing is to be received which is *contrary* to reason. In this sense, the decisions of reason, and the doctrines of revelation, cannot be opposed to each other. The latter is the voice of God, presenting us with truth through a particular medium, viz. language; the former is that faculty or power of the mind, whose appropriate object is to perceive or apprehend truth, and by which alone, therefore, we are capable of deciding, and are to decide, on the import of the language which he uses in a revelation. The word reason is indeed more properly restricted in its application to intellect or mind acting upon or contemplating the higher objects of thought; while to mind exercised upon common things, or perhaps oftener to the *results* of such exercise, we give the name of *common sense*. Those results constitute the elements, or materials, which we incorporate into the higher processes of thought and reasoning, and into our deliberations concerning the practical affairs of life. Their aid is essential, and a regard to them is likewise indispensable, to prudent conduct for time and to right action for our short being; for they either teach, or help us to learn, the diversified reality of things, according to which we must act, if we would act wisely. To these results, in a former discussion of this subject, we gave the name of *decisions*, or *dictates*, of common sense. They are *tacit* decisions, instantaneous, without conscious effort or thought, and latent in the mind, till occasion calls them forth. We use our common sense as the artist does his practical knowledge of his art. They are called decisions of *common sense*, because they constitute a mass of knowledge respecting what is true and false, right and wrong, proper and improper, wise and unwise, in the ordinary circumstances of man, which knowledge is common to all. Now we think no one will say, that there can be any thing in the bible which is contrary to a single one of these decisions, if it can be truly shown to be universally made by a competent, unperverted common sense. But we are continually, though tacitly, incorporating these decisions, as materials, into these higher exercises of the intellectual faculty which we term reasoning. It is in fact one and the same faculty that furnishes us with our common sense, or is common sense itself, and that enables us to come to the most distant and difficult conclusions. It is mind exercised, only upon different subjects; or else the results of such exercise. In admitting therefore that the bible contains nothing contrary to common sense, under certain limitations, we do virtually admit that

under the same limitations, it can contain nothing contrary to reason.

These limitations we have heretofore abundantly explained. It is impossible to pay too strict a regard to them. False philosophy always presents itself under the garb, and as the offspring, of *reason*; there is a kind of christianity which is called *rational christianity*, though it is directly the reverse; and great boast, from time to time, is made of a *rational theology*, which, after all, is contrary to reason. Shall we give up these names, because others abuse them? Shall we say there is no gold, because there are so many counterfeits? Why are we not rather taught, by the frequency and wonderful skill of the counterfeiting, that it is indeed a thing of utmost price which is counterfeited, and hold it with a firmer and surer grasp, the more dextrous and artful the efforts which are made to wrest it from us? Why not maintain the more strenuously and circumspectly the perfect consistency with reason of every thing both in doctrinal and practical religion, the more inconsistencies are alledged to be found in it? Until the import and the associations of the word reason shall have entirely changed from what they are at present, except in the usage of a few philosophizing men, it appears to us that it would be exceedingly ill-judged and pernicious for evangelical christians to relinquish the use of it, in such connections as have been the subject of these remarks. It would be relinquishing the *things* which we now express by the *reasonableness of revealed religion*, etc. unless some other terms be adopted to express them. Should we proceed in this way, we might be driven entirely out of the English language, by persons whose object is to run a scheme of doctrines as nearly parallel as possible with evangelical religion. Christ is called a *divine Redeemer* by some who only mean that he is a created being, divinely constituted as such. Shall we therefore abandon the use of the word in that connection, with our own meaning attached to it? To do so would at first be abandoning the doctrine itself. So in the other case. To admit that there may be any thing in a revelation which is contrary to reason, while the proper import of that term continues to be what it now is, would be to give up an essential part of their proof of its divine origin. The contrariety of any theory to reason, according to the present use of the term, is the inconsistency of that theory with some one of these truths to which we arrive by the process called reasoning. These truths differ from those which constitute the dictates of common sense only in being of a higher order, and attained by a greater or less number of steps, each of which was a known truth, and necessarily led to that which followed; while the lowest step in the series, if not others, was one of those infal-

libile dictates. We say *necessarily* led—this tests the soundness of the reasoning, and the correctness of the conclusion. Now if a process of reasoning will bear the requisite tests, from the fundamental truth, or truths, through all the links of the chain, how can we avoid confiding in the result, and believing it to be impossible that any part of divine revelation should be inconsistent with it? Or rather, how can we avoid receiving those interpretations of scripture, which accord with the ordinary decisions of common sense, or with the higher truths deduced by reasoning from these decisions, rather than others which are inconsistent with them? Or if a passage will bear but one interpretation, and that one contrary to a known and well tried deduction of right reason, is it possible that any purely historical evidence in favor of its being from God, should be equal to the evidence of such a contrariety against it?

We are not without apprehensions that some will object to these views, as after all, setting up reason above revelation. We have indeed exhibited views which go to set up right reason and common sense above certain philosophical *theories* which some individuals have *supposed* to be authorized by revelation. This is the length and breadth of what we have done. We have all along admitted and maintained that parts of a divine revelation may be expected to be, and that parts of the bible actually are *above* reason, but not *contrary* to it. None of the cardinal doctrines of the gospel have any thing to fear from the latter principle; but every thing from the admission that right reason and revelation may be inconsistent. What possible success can the messenger of divine truth hope for, unless in preaching those doctrines, he can carry the understandings and consciences of his hearers along with him at every step? Did not Paul and his fellow-apostles do this—by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God? Can inconsistencies, contradictions, absurdities, be forced upon men's understandings? Or if they could, would they produce the same effect as consistent and evident truth? And what is the difference between that which is properly contrary to reason, and an absurdity? Are those principles, then, erroneous, and not to be trusted, which lead us to expunge from our *views* of revelation, not from *revelation itself*, whatever theories, speculations, philosophy, etc. we may have imbibed, which can be *proved* to be inconsistent with right reason and common sense?

In an interesting chapter on popery, Mr. Douglas has unfolded its nature and origin at considerable length. That system of religion, in its root and substance, is the same as the paganism of ancient Rome. Its doctrines and practices have here and there

a slight similitude to christianity, "a thin disguise," through which we recognize at once the body of that very superstition which, for several centuries, resisted the religion of the cross—a circumstance which proves that where that resistance ceased, it was by an incipient process of amalgamation between the two systems, not by the triumph of one over the other. Were the public mind in our country thoroughly possessed with correct information and right views of the religion of pagan Rome,—such information as classical studies might impart,—the likeness of popery to that religion would appear so striking, so indisputable, that Roman catholics would have no hopes of success among us. We will present a few of the points of similarity, but enough to verify the remarks just made. Our authorities are, the work under review, and the "Vestiges of ancient manners and customs, discoverable in modern Italy and Sicily," by Rev. John James Blunt.

First, the old Romans held the doctrine of a purgatory.

"Lo! to the secret shadows I retire,
To pay my penance till my years expire.
Proceed, auspicious prince, with glory crown'd,
And born to better fates than I have found."
He said; and, while his step, he turn'd
To secret shadows, and in silence mourn'd.
The hero looking on the left, espy'd
A lofty tow'r, and strong on ev'ry side
With treble walls, which Phlegethon surrounds,
Whose fiery flood the burning empire bounds:
And press'd betwixt two rocks, the bellowing noise resounds.
Wide is the fronting gate, and rais'd on high
With adamant columns, threatens the sky.
Vain is the force of man, and heav'n's as vain,
To crush the pillars which the pile sustain.
Sublime on these a tow'r of steel is rear'd;
And dire Tisiphone there keeps the ward,
Girt in her sanguine gown, by night and day,
Observant of the souls that pass the downward way.
From hence are heard the groans of ghosts, the pains
Of sounding lashes, and of dragging chains.

Dryden's Virgil. Book VI.

The scheme which is only here hinted at, Dante gives us in detail; and it is worthy of notice that he takes the Mantuan bard his guide through the regions of purgatory. We may trace, moreover, the emanative system of pantheism in this doctrine. According to that system, all spirits are emanations from one great fountain of being, and becoming contaminated by their connection here with matter, which is the only thing that is evil, need to be purified by the action of fire, and when thus purified, return again to their original source. Thus the Roman catholic believes, and the restorationist with him, after the example of the Gnostics of old, that the endurance of pain for a limited season,

will reform the vices of the wicked, and prepare them for the joys of heaven. The latter do not indeed believe that the soul, after purification, is literally and truly merged into the divine being, as the emanative system, strictly interpreted, teaches; but with this exception, the resemblance is complete.

In the second place, the multiplication of deities furnishes a striking resemblance between the religion of ancient and modern Rome. In the mythology of antiquity, the elements, and even the common operations of nature, were personified, and worshipped as Gods, but especially the spirits of departed heroes. In the polytheism of the Roman catholics, saints take the place of the deities of old—they preside over fountains, effect cures, rule the elements, and protect the lives and fortunes of their votaries. The deification of illustrious men, in particular, has been imitated in the canonization of saints. As the superstition of the ancient Romans led them to place the images of their Gods, at the corners of streets, at the entrance of houses, or beside their couches, so the superstition of the modern Italians shows itself in precisely the same manner. The figure of a saint or a Madonna is every where as common now as that of a god in old Rome; and the situations in which they are found, and the powers attributed to them, are strikingly similar.

Pagan Rome was idolatrous. So is papal. Of this it were sufficient evidence to refer to the deification of the *Virgin Mary*. She is called the *Mother of God*, and worship above the reverence due to any created being, is paid to her image. To her is assigned the providential government of the world. In danger, the catholic implores her assistance; for deliverance he renders her acknowledgment. Throughout Italy and Sicily, are temples and chapels almost innumerable, dedicated, not to God, but to the Madonna. An essential agency in human salvation is ascribed to her. None can become partakers of the favor of God and life without her interposition. A similar place in kind, but lower in degree, is given to the *saints*. Prayer is made to them, as to the virgin, temples and altars are erected, and idolatrous homage is paid. The appropriate influence of this system of idolatry may not be felt by every catholic. With Pascal and Fenelon, and men of that stamp, its influence was counteracted by that of the truth. With them it ceased to be idolatry. But the mass of the Roman catholics do make a goddess of the Madonna, and gods of their saints. It is a practical deification, as far as the nature of the human mind, and the truth in the case, will permit it to be. The coincidence between the idolatry of ancient and that of modern Rome, however, exists not merely in the general fact; it runs through a great variety of particular circumstances. The

virgin has taken the place of the ancient Goddess Cybele. That goddess was called the mother of the gods;* peculiar honors were paid to her in Rome, and the day of her festival, was the same as that of our lady.† The points of resemblance between the ancient deities and the modern saints, are many. First, in their original character. The gods of the Romans were often mortals, who, after their death, were supposed to be exalted to that rank, on account of their great deeds or virtues. So with the saints of the Italians. Secondly, in their number. Italy of old was filled with temples to her various deities; churches now are no less numerous, to the Madonna, or some particular saint. Different temples were consecrated to the same god, under different titles; different churches are now dedicated to the same object of worship under various names. Thirdly, in the places and things over which they preside. The gods of old were supposed to delight in particular islands, hills, fountains; so it is now with the saints in an equal degree. Every spring or mountain of any note remains as sacred as it was in classical antiquity, and has its presiding saint, as it once had its presiding divinity. In their supernatural powers. The Romans had their gods of medicine and health, who performed miraculous cures; the saints of modern days, it is well known, are thought to do no less. In their moral character. The ancients never scrupled to represent their gods as wicked in the last degree; in this respect, the legends of the saints fall not much short of a parallel. In the use made of their images. The Romans always had images of their gods in their houses, in markets and other public places, at the intersection of streets, etc: these were generally small statues; and pictures of the Madonna or a saint now answer precisely the same purposes, and in the same manner. The same pagan temple often contained many altars for the worship of different deities; so it is now with the same church. Dr. Middleton derives this popish practice from the similar use of the Romans, "because there never was an example of it but what was paganish before the times of popery," but abundance of them in paganism. The heathen temple, moreover, was often stripped of its gods, only to make way for as many saints. The same acts of worship are performed to popish saints, as were of old to heathen gods,—the lighting up of candles, the burning of incense, making votive offerings and prayers.

The high priest of popery derives his style and title, as well as his rank and power, from the sovereign pontiff, (*Pontifex Maxi-*

* *Mater Deorum, Berecynthia Mater.* § *Vestiges, &c. chap. 3.*
VOL. VI. 64

mus,) of old Rome, and not from St. Peter. We argue this on the principle of similarity. The pope claims not only infallibility, but supreme power and authority, in all matters civil and ecclesiastical. This is word for word the same that might be said of the Pontifex Maximus, "whose authority and dignity was the greatest in the republic, and who was looked upon as the arbiter or judge of all things, civil as well as sacred, human as well as divine."

Next let us compare the rites and ceremonies of pagan, with those of papal Rome. The most prominent article, in the religious services of the Romans, was sacrifice; the victim in which was called *hostia*. The mass of the Roman catholics is a sacrifice also, (*sacrifizio della Messa*,) and the wafer which is offered is called Ostia. The attendance of boys upon the officiating priest during the celebration of mass, and the frequent ringing of bells, are likewise relics of paganism.

We shall pursue the parallel between the popery of modern, and the paganism of ancient Rome, no farther. We have presented it so much in detail, only because such a course is indispensable to produce the legitimate effect of the truth in this case. A few detached points of similarity in externals might easily be accounted for, without seriously implicating the character of popery; and therefore, would not constitute legitimate proof of its pagan origin. But when the whole spirit and structure, the essential, as well as incidental parts of the system, are seen to be any thing but christian, and plainly borrowed from the religion of ancient Rome, the inference is not to be avoided—popery is not christianity, not like it, except in a few names, and part of its dress. The *things* remain as they were, in the midnight of pagan superstition. They are baptized, but not changed. From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, the sin and corruption of idolatry still reign with undiminished sway. Such is the view which should now be taken of it by the christian world. It should be placed upon the same footing with the religion of the Hindoos, the Chinese, or the followers of Mahommed. Some within the pale of that church, as we have already intimated, undoubtedly had the true spirit of christianity. So might Socrates, for aught we can decide, have been a good man, surrounded and enveloped with darkness that might be felt. The change to be wrought in catholic countries, is as radical as that which must take place among the heathen. There is no more of the right leaven in the one than in the other. But infidelity will first succeed the downfall of popery. It will come over the face of countries where that system prevails, like a flood. Already the reaction has commenced. The grasp of unrighteous power is loosening; the

freshening current of manly feeling and free thought and public opinion, is undermining its base; its ruin cannot long be delayed. Set free from the heavy pressure under which it has been the policy of that church for centuries to keep all within its pale, the mass of mind, now catholic, may be expected to burst forth far beyond all just limits, and licentiousness, of every form and feature, both in belief and practice, to prevail. Let the common sense of mankind for a long period be insulted, the conscious right of freedom in thought and action denied them, and though they may for a while forbear, there always comes at last a reckoning day with the oppressor, whether he chains the mind or the body.

We welcome then, portentous though it be, the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, the sound of which we hear abroad. It must be; old things will not pass away without violent commotion. The strong holds of error and tyranny will be defended with the resolution of despair; but, crumbling with age, they cannot long withstand the reaction of an over-wrought system of oppression. Temple and tower of time-sanctioned opinion and custom, tending to destroy men's happiness here and hereafter, must come to the ground; and over the ruins, infidelity, anarchy, atheism and the whole brood of the bottomless pit, may for awhile stalk triumphantly around. But from those ruins silently, without hands, shall rise another temple glorious to behold with the Rock of Ages for its foundation; the Spirit of God shall move the living stones thereof; the beams of its effulgent glory shall spread and circulate over the wide earth; all nations shall see it, and flow together. Truth, then, beautiful, consistent, dictating universal benevolence to man, universal obedience to God, shall reign; things shall be seen as they are, and that perfect vision control all minds and all hearts. Far in the distance, will be seen the retiring clouds of darkness, the clear light now shining; and soon, error, and sin, and crime, with all remembrance that they once were, will sleep in the same grave of forgetfulness together.

The signs of the times plainly indicate that a change of this kind is approaching. Truth, in all its departments, is gaining, error losing, ground. The action of public opinion upon civil government, will in the issue, bear equally upon religious liberty. With religious liberty comes free inquiry; which, though it may for a time be abused, through the reaction spoken of above, will eventually bring out the truth. The redeeming influence of the gospel will be unchained, and all be brought to operate, with their entire efficiency, upon the mind and heart of man. Perhaps the most effectual means for the attainment of this end, is the early instruc-

tion of youth in the bible. Its immediate results are the conversion of many, and the enlistment of their lives, with peculiar energy and wholeness of heart, for the cause of truth and of God; its remoter results, the banishment from the earth of those theological errors, some of which even now strip the gospel of its greatest power, and clog its progress towards evangelizing the nations. Pouring as it does, the clear light of truth into the unoccupied, unprejudiced mind, instead of the dimness and perplexity, if not egregious error, of artificial systems, it secures the aid of some of the strongest principles of our own nature against opinions which have nothing to sanction them but the voice of antiquity and boasted authority. He who has once loved the truth, especially the truth of religion, for its own sake, and above all, if that love is the act of a mind not inured to sin and error, will no more suffer his understanding or his heart to be cramped into an artificial system, than he would voluntarily immure himself in the dungeons of the Inquisition. Error often takes strong possession of the mind; but it holds possession by a tenure frail indeed, compared with that of truth. Error is never loved for any thing in itself; but for the base service it renders in strengthening wrong feeling and purposes. In itself it is all along considered and viewed somewhat as the traitor is, after his treason is wrought. Thus it is *practically*. By putting the simple truth into the youthful mind, then, christians of the present day are not only shutting out error, but they are doing it most effectually, and securing a phalanx of strength hitherto unexampled, which will drive it from the earth. The whole mighty influence of converted sabbath school scholars, will be thrown, with peculiar directness into the scale of the plain precept and doctrine of the bible, as interpreted by common sense and the aid of the Spirit of God, (children know no other guides,) and against every device of vain and far-fetched philosophy. The ultimate results of the methods of instruction in question, baffle all calculation. Hitherto, slowly, and only by displacing error and prejudice enough to bar successfully its entrance to many minds, has the truth gained its victory. The spirit of effort for the spread of religion has often been checked, if not destroyed, by the fetters and manacles of a restricted gospel; thought and feeling have been chained, the vitality of spiritual life deadened, and much, alas! how much, of the water of life spilt on the ground. Now, the ministers and church of Christ are beginning to *go right on*, under the cheering belief that, in general at least, God will bless his own truth just so far as it is faithfully, judiciously, and prayerfully brought to bear on the consciences of men. This happy state of mind proceeds from the habit of direct reference to the

bible for truth, and motive, and direction. It springs from having early learned what is true, and right, and holy, and from having the soul imbued with the transforming, vivifying influence of such knowledge.

ART. VIII.—NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence. By the late GEORGE CAMPBELL, D. D. F. R. S. Edin. Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen; to which are added *Dialogues on Eloquence.* By WILLIAM DE FENELON, Archbishop of Cambray. Edited by Henry J. Ripley. Professor of Biblical Literature and Pastoral Duties in the Newton Theological Institution. pp. 236 and 102. 8vo. Boston: Lincoln & Edmands. 1832.

The high and well merited reputation of Dr. Campbell's various writings is extensively known. His lectures on systematic theology, make but a small part of the book before us. They are only six in number, and are of a moderate length; but they are of great value. They do not, indeed, present to the student a system of theology, but they show him how he may become able to prepare one for himself. They teach him, not what he must believe, but how he may ascertain from the sacred scripture what he must believe. The first lecture dwells on the study of natural religion, and the evidences of christianity; the second maintains that the scriptures ought to be the first study, and that afterwards systems and commentaries may be occasionally consulted; the third and fourth teach 'how the student ought to enter on the examination of the scriptures,' give directions for forming an abstract of christian doctrine and duties, and expatiate on the advantages of the method recommended; the fifth continues the same subject, and mentions some considerations tending to show how far the study of controversy demands our attention; the sixth proposes a method of prosecuting our inquiries in Polemic Divinity, shows the use to be made of scholia, paraphrases, and commentaries, and exhibits the danger of relying on human guidance in matters of religion.

The Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence, constitute the principal part of the book; and, as Professor Ripley well remarks in his judicious preface, they need no recommendation.

"During the several years," he adds, "in which I have given instruction in the department of pastoral duties, I have met with nothing so well adapted to prepare a student for the composition of sermons. This, however, does not imply that every thing contained in these lectures is indispensable, or is in fact just as it should be. Some may doubt the utility of the author's exact distribution of sermons into the various kinds which he mentions. Some, again, may fear that sermons executed according to his directions would be like marble statues, graceful indeed, and polished, yet destitute of living expression. But of what system of directions on any subject, as used by a beginner, may not the same complaint be made? Shall the artist then refuse to study rules? Shall we have no books on rhetoric? It requires no uncommon share of good sense either in a student or an instructor, least of all in the affectionate pastor, to derive the contemplated benefit from a system of directions, and, at the same time, to avoid the stiffness of scholastic rules. Experience will soon render the application of rules easy;

and to the correctness which the study of rules may impart, will add a happy adaptation to the character and circumstances of men. For this adaptation, as for true eloquence, 'labor and learning may toil, but they will toil in vain. They cannot compass it. It must exist in the man;' and it can be cherished and perfected only by his coming into contact with his fellow men. He must be a slow learner indeed who does not soon discover, that one of the most important rules for preparing profitable sermons in the actual state of a minister's people is, not to be so *fettered* by any rules respecting the choice of a subject or text, or respecting the manner of discussion, as to be prevented from embracing a favorable opportunity for impressing religious truth. A correct acquaintance with the scriptures, a mind deeply imbued with their sentiments, good common sense, an affectionate solicitude for the salvation of men, an abiding sense of responsibility to God, are the grand requisites for useful preaching. And did a man possessing these, never read Fordyce, Claude, or Campbell, he still might become a highly valuable minister of the gospel. But of the utility of some helps in this part of a minister's duty, who can doubt? That helps have been sought to an extreme, is painfully evident from the fact that such books as Simeon's *Skeletons* and Hannam's *Pulpit Assistant*, have found purchasers. The other extreme would be, for an unpractised man to neglect all helps. A suitable medium is furnished by Dr. Campbell, whose directions proceed from a correct view of human nature, and are adapted to call forth and invigorate the mental powers of the preacher."

In these views we most heartily concur; and we hesitate not, to commend the perusal of the *Lectures* to every candidate for the christian ministry, and the re-perusal of them to all who have entered upon their high and holy work with a desire of being increasingly useful.

The *Dialogues of Fenelon* concerning eloquence in general, and particularly that kind which is proper for the pulpit, are a valuable accompaniment to the *Lectures of Campbell*; and it is by studying the two works in connection that the greatest benefit from each will be derived.

The book to which we have now invited the attention of our readers, furnishes abundance of materials for extended discussion; and this, to some extent, is the case with every important production on an interesting subject. But we do not deem it necessary on this occasion to protract our remarks. It is enough to say, and it is not too much, to say that this volume, the product of the good sense and erudition of Campbell, combined with the genius and classic taste of Fenelon, presents, in a lucid and happy manner, many of the most important rules and considerations, on a subject of permanent and thrilling interest to every preacher of the gospel.

Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations; by the late ANDREW THOMSON Crocker & Brewster, J. Leavitt.

THE author of these sermons, though his name has been little known in this country in comparison with those of Chalmers and Wardlaw, stood for more than twenty years, by the general consent of his countrymen, at the head of the established Kirk of Scotland. For this high pre-eminence, he was not indebted to his distinguished abilities alone, great as they certainly were, but in

part to his station as pastor of St. George's church in Edinburgh, and still more to the peculiar *adaptation* of his powers, to the existing circumstances of the Scottish Church. Dr. Thomson was a man of uncommonly strong native sense, bold, ready, and direct on argument; addressing himself to the minds of others on every subject, in a manner which commanded the respect of all, while it was level to the comprehension of the most ordinary mind. Previous to his settlement in the ministry at Edinburgh, it had been the policy of the town council of that city, to translate to its vacant parishes, ministers of considerable age and standing, from among the country clergy. With habits already formed in the early part of their ministry, it was difficult for such men to accommodate themselves to the taste and feelings of a refined and fastidious audience; and the consequence was, that the clergy of Edinburgh had by no means that influence among the literati of the northern metropolis, which was demanded by the interests of evangelical religion. When therefore Dr. Thomson was called to Edinburgh at the age of thirty, with a style of preaching at once highly animated, and argumentative, simple and dignified, pungent and yet conciliating, the impression which he made on the minds of all—even those who had learned in the school of Hume, to despise christianity,—was of the happiest kind. Those who are acquainted with a work, entitled *Peters' Letters to his kinsfolk*, written fifteen years since by Mr. Lockhart, now Editor of the *London Quarterly Review*, will recollect the high eulogium extorted by the abilities of Dr. Thomson, from one who was equally his enemy in religion and politics. Within a few years after his removal to the parish of St. George's, Dr. Thomson with a direct reference to the sentiments of the literati of Edinburgh, preached a course of sermons on Infidelity, which were afterwards published, and which have passed through a number of editions. These are by far the most powerful productions of his pen, and their influence on the metropolis of Scotland has been great and permanent. He likewise published a number of other volumes of sermons, of less general interest; and the one before us has been compiled by his friends, from the manuscripts which he left behind him at his decease. It contains twenty two discourses which may be taken as specimens of his ordinary style of preaching. A single extract is all for which we have room.

There is a power and a magnitude, and a richness in the love of God towards those upon whom it is set, to which the love of the creature cannot even approximate, of which the imagination of the creature could not have formed any previous idea, and which, even to the experience of the creature, presents a subject of inscrutable mystery—a theme of wondering gratitude and praise. Man may love, man should love, man must love his fellows; but he never did and never can love them like God. His is a love that throws man's into the distance and

the shade. Had he only loved us as man loves, there would have been no salvation—no heaven—no felicity for us—no glad tidings to cheer our hearts;—no promised land on which to fix our anticipations—no table of commemoration and of communion spread for us in the wilderness, to refresh us amidst the toils, and the languishings, and the sorrows of our pilgrimage thither. His violated law must have taken its course; the vials of his wrath must have been poured out; and everlasting, unmitigated ruin must have been our portion. But behold! God is love itself; and his love in all his workings, and in all its influences, and in all its effects, can stoop to no parallel with the best and most ardent of human affections. Guilt, which forbids and represses man's love, awakens, and kindles, and secures God's. Death for the guilty is too wide a gulf for man's love to pass over. God's love to the guilty is infinitely "stronger than death," and spurns at all such limits, and smiles at the agonies and the ignominies of a cross, that it may have its perfect work. God, in the exercise of his love towards our sinful and miserable race, is concerned, where man would be unmoved, indifferent, and cold. God is full of pity, where man would frown with stern and relentless aversion. God forgives, where man would condemn and punish. God saves where man would destroy. pp. 68—9.

History of the United States; to which is prefixed a brief historical account of our English ancestors, from the dispersion at Babel, to their migration to America; and of the conquest of South America, by the Spaniards. By NOAH WEBSTER, LL. D. New-Haven: published by Durrie & Peck. price 50 cents.

It is certainly fortunate for our country that so much talent and learning is employed in the preparation of school books. We have school geographies and school arithmetics from men whose attainments in their respective departments of authorship are of the highest order; we have a spelling book from the lexicographer whose work is a standard on two continents; and here we have in this little volume of history designed especially for schools, the result of studies which might have furnished a series of ponderous quartos.

Though this book is designed for the use of schools, it will be found a valuable addition to a library. The well known learning of the author has enriched his work with materials which are not within the reach of all who think that they have read our history. Of the things which have come to pass since the war of the revolution, Dr. Webster has been a personal and close observer; for that period the book is the result not of documentary investigation only, but also, to a great extent, of personal recollections.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—To a friend who asks 'whether we believe, that God does all to convert sinners, which is *consistent with their free agency*,' we answer, No. Though this sentiment may seem to be implied in the former part of the sentence, (bottom of page 258 vol. iii.) yet at the *close*, the dispensation of the Spirit is especially said to be limited by the divine "*wisdom and benevolence*," not by man's agency.

Our episcopal brother will see by referring to the passage, (vol. iii. 160) that it was of "*many*," not the "*English writers*," that we said, "they admit that apostolic churches were congregational." This surely is true. See *Christian Spectator* for Dec. 1830.